



264:90



TO

THERIGHT WORSHIPFVLL

Sir IOHN BANKES Knight, the Kings Majesties Attourney Generall, Sir Edward Mosely Knight, his Majesties Attourney of the Duchie,

9ir WILLIAM DENNY, Knight, one of the Kings learned Counsell,

Sir DVDLY DIGGES, Knight, one of the Masters of the Chauncery,

And the rest of the Worshipfull Readers and Benchers, with the Auncients, Barresters, Students, and all others belonging to the Honourable Societie of Grayes Inne:

R. SIBBS Dedicateth these Sermons Preached amongst them, in testimony of his due Observance, and desire of their spirituall and eternall good.

in the same a a A o znomíne stát Paleda o salet 3.00

TO CAME. E CHRISTIAN READER.

Here be two forts of people alwaies in the visible Church. One that Satan keepes under with false peace, whose life is nothing Subut a diversion to pre-

(ent contentments, and a running away from God and their owne hearts, which they know can speake no good unto them; these speake peace to themselves, but God speakes none. Such have nothing to doe with this Scripture; the way for these men to enjoy com. fort, is to be foundly troubled. True peace arises from knowing the worst first, & then our freedome from it. It is a miserable peace that rifeth from ignorance of evill. The Angell troubled the waters, and then cured John s. those that stept in. It is Christs manner, to trouble our soules first, and then to come with healing in his wings.

But there is another fort of people, who

being drawen out of Satans kingdome, and within the Covenant of grace, whom Satan labours to unsettle and disquiet : being the God of the world, be is vexed to see men in the world, walke above the world. Since be cannot hinder their eftate, be will trouble their peace, and dampe their spirits, and cut a sunder the sinewes of all their endeavours. These should take themselves to taske as David doth here, and labour to maintain their portion, and the glory of a Christian profession. For whatsoever is in God or comes from God, is for their comfort. Him selfe is the God of comfort; his Spirit most knowne by that office. Our bleffed Saviour was so carefull that his Disciples should not be too much deiected, that he forgat his own bitter pasion to comfort them, whom yet he knew would all for (ake him: Let not your hearts be troubled faith he. And his owne soule was troubled to death, that we should not be troubled: what soever is written is written for this end; every article of faith bath a special influence in comforting a beleeving foule. They are not onely food, but cordials : Tea he put himselfe to his Oath, that we might not onely have Confolation

solation but strong Consolation. The Sacraments seale unto us all the comforts wee have by the death of Christ; the exercise of Religion, as Prayer, Hearing, Reading, &c. is that our joy may be full: the Communion of Saints is chiefly ordained to comfort the feeble minded, and to strengthen the weake. Gods government of his Church tends to this. Why doth hee sweeten our pilgrimage, and let us see so many comfortable dayes in the world, but that we should serve him with cheerefull and good bearts? As for crosses, he doth but cast us downe, to raise us up, and empty us that hee may fill us, and melt us, that we may bee vessels of glory, loving us as well in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while. We are troubled, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despaire; persecuted, but not forsaken. wee consider from what fatherly love afflictions come, how they are not only moderated, but sweetned and sanctified in the issue to us, how can it but minister matter of comfort in the greatest seeming discoforts ? How then can we let the reines of our affections loofe to forow without being injurious A4

2 Cor.4. 8.

rious to God and his providence? as if wee would teach him how to govern his Church?

What unthankfulnesse is it to forget our consolation, and to looke only moon
matter of grievance; to thinke so much
upon two or three crosses as to forget a
hundred blessings? To suck poyson out of
that, from which we should suck honey?
Whatfolly is it to straighten and darken
our owne spirits? And indispose our selves
for doing or taking good? A limbe out of
ioynt can do enothing without deformity and
paine; deiestion takes off the wheeles of the
soule.

of all other, Satan hath most advantage of discontented persons, as most agreeable to his disposition, being the most discontented creature under heaven; He hammers all his darke plots in their braines. The discontentment of the Israelites in the wildernesse, provoked God to sweare, that they should never enter into his rest. There is another spirit in my servant Caleb sath God; the spirit of Gods people is an incourageing spirit. Wisdome teaches them if they feele any grievances to conceale them from others that are weaker, least they be dis-

Pf.95. ult.

Deu. 28.65

disheartned. God threatens it as a curse to give a trembling heart and forrow of minde : whereas on the contrary joy is as orle to the foule, it makes duties come off cheerefully and sweetly from our selves, gratiously to others, and acceptably to God. A Prince cannot indure it in his subiects, nor a Father in his children to be lowring at their pre sence. Such usually have stoken waters to delight themselves in.

How many are there that upon the dif-

grace that followes Religion, are frighted from it ? But what are discouragements, to the incouragements Religion brings with it? which are such as the very Angels them. selves admire at. Religion indeede brings crosses with it, but then it brings comforts above these crosses. What a dishonour is it to Religion to conceive that God will not maintaine and honour his followers? as if his service were not the best service : what a shame is it for an beire of heaven to be cast downe for every pety losse and crosse: To bee afraid of a man whose breath is in his nos. trils, in not standing to a good cause, when we are fure God will stand by us, asifing and comforting us, whose presence is able to

Tua prafen. tia Domine Laurentio ipfam craticulam dulce fecit.

make

make the greatest torments sweete.

My discourse tends not to take men off from all griefe and mourning; Light for the righteous is sowen in sorrow: Our state of absence from the Lord, and living here in a vail of teares, our daily infirmities, and our sympathy with others, requires it; and where most grace is there is most sensibleness, as in Christ. But we must distinguish between griefe and that sullennesse and deiection of spirit, which is with a repining and taking off from duty; when Joshua was overmuch cast down at I fraels turning their backs before their enemies, God reproves him, Get thee up Joshua, why liest thou upon thy sace?

Judg.7.10.

Some would have men after the committing of grosse sinneto be presently comfortable, and believe without humbling themselves at all; indeed when we ore once in Christ, we ought not to question our state in him, and if we doe, it comes not from the spirit: But yet a guilty conscience will be clamorous and full of objections, or God will not speake peace unto it till it be humbled. God will let his best children know what it is to be too bold with sinne, as we see in David vid and Peter, who felt no peacetill they hadrenued their repentance: The way to reioyce with joy unipeakable and glorious, is to stirre up sighs that cannot be uttered. And it is so farre, that the knowledge of our state in grace should not humble us, that very ingenuity cosidering Gods love to us, out of the nature of the thing it self workes forrow and shame in us, to offend his Maiesty.

One maine stop that hinders Christians from reioncing, is, that they give them selves too much liberty to question their grounds of comfort and interest in the promises. This is wonderfull cofortable say they, but what is it to me? the promise belogs not to me. This ariseth from want of giving all diligence to make their calling fure to themselves. In watchfulnesse and diligence we sooner meet with comfort the inidle complaining. Our care therefore should be to get sound evidence of a good estate, and then likewise to keepe our evidence cleare; wherein we are not to hearken to our own feares and doubts, or the suggestion of our enemy, who studies to falsifie our evidence: but to the Word, and our owne consciences inlightned by the spirit: and then it is pride and pettish-

2 Pet. 10.

nesset to stand out against comfort to themselves. Christians should studie to corroborate their title: We are never more in heaven, before we come thither, then when wee canread our evidences: It makes us converse much with God, it sweetens all conditions, and makes us willing to doe and suffer any thing. It makes us have comfortable and honourable thoughts of our selves, as too good for the service of any base lust, and brings considence in God both in life and death.

But what if our condition he so darke, that we cannot reade our evidence at all?

Here looke up to Gods infinite mercy in Christ, as we did at the first when we found no goodnesse in our selves, and that is the way to recover what seever we thinke wee bave lost. By honouring Gods mercy in Christ, we come to have the Spirit of Christ; therefore when the waters of sanctification are troubled and muddy, let us runne to the witnesse of blood. God seemes to walke sometimes contrary to himselfe; he seemes to discourage, when secretly he doth incourage, as the woman of Canaan; but faith can finde out these wayes of God, and untie these knots,

knots, by looking to the free promise and mercifull nature of God. Let our sottish and rebellious flesh murmure as much as it will, who art thou? and what is thy worth? Yet a Christian knowes whom hee beleeves. Faith hath learned to set God actions all

gainst all.

13

Againe, we must goe on to adde grace to grace. A growing and fruitfull Christian, is alwayes a comfortable Christian; theoyle of grace brings forth the oyle of gladnesse. Christ is first a King of righteousnesse, and then a King of peace; the righteousnesse that hee workes by his Spirit brings a peace of sanctification, whereby though we are not freed from sinne, yet we are enabled to combate with it, & to get the victory over it. Some degree of comfort followes every good action, as heate accompanies fire, and as beames and influences issue from the Sunne; which is so true, that very Heathens upon the discharge of a good conscience, have found comfort and peace answerable; this is a reward before our reward.

Heb.7.2.

Another thing that hinders the comfort of Christians is, that they forget what a oracious

Pramium ante pramium.

gratious and mercifull covenant they live under, wherein, the perfection that is required is to be found in Christ. Perfection in us is sincerity: What is the end of faith but to bring us to Christ? Now imperfect faith, if sincere, knits to Christ, in whom

our perfection lies.

Gods designe in the covenant of grace, is to exalt the riches of his mercy, above all sinne and unworthinesse of man; and wee yeeldhim more glory of his mercy by beleeving then it would be to his Instice to destroy us. If we were perfect in our selves, we should not bonour him so much, as when we labour to bee found in Christ, having his righteousnesse upon us.

There is no one portion of Scripture oftner used to fetch up drooping spirits then this, Why art thou cast downeoh my soule? it is figurative, and full of Rhetorique, and all little enough to perswade the perplexed Soule, quietly to trust in God; which without this retiring into our selves and checking our hearts, wil never be brought to paffe. Chrysostome brings in a man loaden with troubles, comming into the Church, where when he heardthis passage read, he presently recovered

Homi: in Gen.

recovered himselfe, and becomes another man. As David therefore did acquaint bim selfewith this forme of dealing with his soule, so let us, demanding a reason of our Celves Why wee are cast downe: which will at least checke and put a stoppe to the distresse, and make us fit to consider more so-

lid grounds of true comfort.

b

re

Of necessity the Soule muß bee somthing calmed and flaid before it can be comforted. Whileft the humours of the body rage in a great distemper, there is no giving of physicke: So when the soule gives way to passion, it is unfit to entertaine any connfell, therefore it must be stilled by degrees, that it may heare reason; and sometimes it is fitter to be moved with ordinary reason, (as being more familiar unto it) then with higher reasons fetcht from our supernaturall condition in Christ, as from the condition of mans nature subject to changes, from the uncomelinesse of yeelding to passion for that, which it is not in our power to mend, &c. thefe and such like reasons have some use to stay the fit for ambile, but they leave the coar untouched which is sinne, the trouble of all troubles. Tet when such considerations are made spirituall

rituall by faith on higher grounds, they have some operation upon the soule, as the influence of the Moone having the stronger influence of the Sun mingled with it, becomes more effeEluall upon these inferiour bodies. A candle light being ready at hand, is sometimes as use-

full as the Sun it selfe.

But our maine care should be to have Evangelicall grounds of comfort, neere to us, as Reconciliation with God, whereby all shings else are reconciled unto us, Adoption and Communion with Christ,&c. which is never sweeter then under the Crosse. Philip Lansgrave of Hesse, being a long time pri-Soner under Charles the fifth, was demanded what upheld him all that time, Who answered that hee felt the divine comforts of the Martyrs: therebe divine comforts which are felt under the Crosse, and no; at other times.

Respondit, divinas consolutiones Martyrum se senfiffe.

Besides personall troubles, there are many much dejected with the present state of the Church, seeing the blood of so many Saints to be shed, and the enemies oft to prevaile; but God hath stratagems, as Joshua, at Ay; he seemes sometimes to retire that he may come upon his enemies with the greater advantage; the

the end of all these troubles will no doubt bethe ruine of the Antichristian faction; and we shall see the Church in her more perfect beauty, when the enmies shall be in that place which is fittest for them, the lowest, that is, the footstoole of Christ; the Church as it is highest in the favour of God, se it shall be highest in it selfe. The mountaine of the Lord shall bee exalted above all mountaines. In the worst condition, the Church hath two faces: One towards heaven and Christ, which is alwaies confant and glorious: Another toward the world, which is in appearance contemptible and changeable. But God will in the end give her beauty for ashes, and glory double to her shame: and she shall in the end prevaile; in the meane time, the power of the enemies is in Gods hand: The Church of God conquers when it is conquered: even as our Head Christ did, who overcame by patience as well as by power. Christs victory was upon the Crosse. The Spirit of a Christian conquers, when his per-Son is conquered.

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The way is, in stead of discouragement, to search althe promises made to the Church in these latter times, and to turne them into Robur kostiumapud Doum.

prayers, and presse Godearnessly for the performance of them. Then we shall soone find God both cursing his enemies, and blessing his people out of Zion, by the faithfull prayers that ascend up from thence.

In all the promises we should have speciall recourse to God in them. In all storms there is Sea roome enough in the infinite goodness of God for faith to be carried with

full faile.

And it must be remembred that in all places where God is mentioned, we are to understand God in the promised Messiah, typified out so many waies unto us. And to put the more vigor into such places in the rea. ding of them, we in this latter age of the Church must thinke of God shining upon us in the face of Christ and our Father in him. If they had so much confidence in so little light, it is a shame for us not to be confident in good things when so strong a light shines round about m; when we professe we believe a crowne of righteousnesse is laid up for all those that love his appearing. Presenting these things to the soul by faith, setteth the soule in such a pitch of resolution, that no discouragements are able to seife upon upon it. We faint not faith S. Paul, wherefore dath he not faint? because these light and short afflictions procure an excee-

ding weight of glory.

Luther when he (aw Melanchon a godly & learned man too much dejected for the state of the Church in those times, fals a chiding of him, as David doth here his own soule, I strongly hate those miserable cares, faith be, whereby thou writest thou art even spent. It is not the greatnesse of the cause, but the greatnesse of the incredulity. If the cause be false let us revoke it. If true, why doe wee make God in his rich promises a lyar? Strive against thy selfe, the greatest enemie; why doe we feare the conquered world, that have the conquerour himselfe on our side.

Now to speake something concerning the publishing of this Treatise. I began to preach on the Text about twelve yeares since in the City, and afterwards finished the same at Grayes-Inne. After which, some having gotten imperfect notes, endeavoured to publish them without my privity. Therefore to doe my selfe right, I thought fit to reduce them

Egomiferrimas cuias, quibus te confumi Cribis,vehamenter odi Duod sic remat in corde tuo. non eft magnitudo cau-Sa, fed ma entudo in. credulitatis nofra. Si causafalsa et, rezoce. mus. Si wera, cur facimus illum tantis promissis mendacem; 1 14ctare contra teip um marimum ho-Item.

To the Christian Reader.

them to this forme: There is a pious and studious gentleman of Grayes-Inne, that hath of late published observations upon the whole plalme; and another upon this very verse very well; and many others by Treatises of faith and such like, have furthered the spiritual peace of Christians much. were to be wished that we would all joyne to doe that which the Apostle gloried in to be helpers of the joy of Gods people. reason of my absence, while the works was in printing, some sentences were mistaken. Some will be ready to deprave the labours of other men; but so good may be done, let such ill disposed persons be what they are, and what they will be unlesse God turne their hearts : and fo I commend thee and this poore Treatife to Gods blesing.

2 Cor. 1.

GRAYES INNE, July. 1. 1635.

R. SIBBES.

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IN OPVS POSTHVMVM ADMODVM REVERENDI, mihique multis Nominibus colendi, RICHARDI SIBBS S.T. Professoris,

RICHARDI SIBBS S.T. Professoris, Aulæ Stæ Cath. Præfecti dignismi-

Ade Liber, pie Dux Anima, pie Mentis Achates; Te relegens Fructu ne pereunte legat. Quam fælix produs! Præ sacro Codice sordent, Bartole, sive tui; sive, Galene, tui.

Fidus Præco De I, exlestis Cultor Agelli Assidui Pretium grande Laboris habet: Quo Mihi nec Vità melior, nec promptior Ore, Gratior aut Vultu, nec suit Arte prior.

Nil opus ut Nardum Caro combibat uncta Sabaum, Altàve marmoreus Sydera tangat Apex: Non eget HIC Urna, non Marmore; nempe Volutien Stat sacrum, vivax Marmor, & Urna, Pio.

Qui CHRISTO vivens incessit Tramite Cali, Æthereum gobit Munus, obire nequit: Ducit Hic Angelicis aqualsa sacula Lustris, Qui VERBO Studium contulit omne sum. B 3 Persegut Perlegat Hunc Legum Cultrix Veneranda Senectus, Et quos plena DEO Mens super Astra vehit: Venduntur (quanti!) circum Palatia Fumi! Hic sacer ALTARIS CARBO minoris erit?

Heu! Pietas ubi prisca? profana o Tempora! Mundi Fax! Vesper! prope Nox! o Mora! CHRISTE veni. Si valuere Preces unquam, & Custodia CHRISTI. Nunc Opus est Precibus, nunc Ope, CHRISTE, tuâ.

Certat in humanis Vitiorum Infamia rebus, Hei mihi! nulla novis sufficit Herba Malis? Probra referre pudet; nec enim decet: Exprobret illa Qui volet; Est nostrum slere, silendo quers.

Flere? Tonabo tuas, Pietas neglecta, Querelas:
Quid non Schisma, Tepor, Fastus, & Astus agunt?
Addo-Sed Historicus TACITUS suit optimus, Immo
Addam — Sphararum at Musica muta places

EDVº: BENLOSIO.

Prid. Cal. Febr.

M DC X X X V.



On the Work of my learned Friend DOCTOR SIBBS.

Poole that I was! to think my case Pen
Had strength enough to gloriste the same
Of this knowne Author, this rare Man of men:
Or give the least advantage to his name. (bright,
Who think, by praise to make his name more
Show the Sunns Glory, by dull Candle-light.

Blest Saint! thy hallow'd Pages doe require
No slight preferment from our slender Layes:
We stand amaz'd, at what we most admire;
Ah, what are Saints the better for our praise!
Hee that commends this Volume, does no more
Then warme the fire, or gild the massie Ore.

Let me stand silent then. O, may that Spirit,
Which ledd thy hand, direct mine eye, my brest,
That I may reade, and doe; and so inherit
(What thou enjoy'st, and taught) eternals Rest!
Foole that I was! to think my Lines could give
Life to that work, by which they hope to live.

FRA: QVA:

Outhe Wink of my line and force Doctor one States

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THE



SOVLES CONFLICT

PSALXLII.

with it selfe.

Why art thou cast downe 0 my soule, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

He Psalmes are, (as it were,) the Anatomy of a holy man which lay the inside of a truely devout man outward to the view of others. If the Scrip-

tures bee compared to a body, the Psalmes may well be the heart, they

3

are so full of sweet affections, and passions. For in other portions of Scripture God speakes to us; but in the Psalmes, holy men speake to God and their own hearts: 4s

In this Psalme, we have the passionate passages of a broken, and a troubled spirit.

At this time David was a banished man, banished from his owne house, from his friends, and which troubled him most, from the house of God, upon occasion of Sauls persecution, who hunted him as a Partridge upon the mountaines: see how this workes upon him.

I.

I. He layes open his desire springing from his love. Love being the prime and leading affection of the soule from whence griefe springs, from being crossed in that we love. For the setting out of which his affection to the sull, hee borroweth an expression from the Hart, no Hart being chased by the hunters, panteth more after the waters, then my heart doth after thee O God, though hee found God present with him in exile, yet there is a sweeter presence of him in his ordinances which now hee wanted

verse I

Master of a familie, not to goe to the house of God alone, nor to heaven alone but to carry as many as he could with him; Oh! the remembrance of this made him powre forth (not his words or his teares onely) but his very soule. Former favours and happinesse makes the soule more sensible of all impressions to the contrarie; hereupon finding his soule over sensible, he expostulates with himselfe; Why art thou cast downe o my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?

verse 7.

But though the remembrance of the former sweetnes of Gods presence did somewhat stay him, yet his grief would not so be stilled, and therefore it gathers upon him againe; one griefe called upon another, as one deep wave follows another without intermission, until his soule was almost over-whelmed under these waters; yet he recovers himselfe a little with looking up to God, who he expected would with speed and authoritie send forth his loving kindnesse with command to raise him up and comfort him, and give him matter of songs in the

will not be calmed, but renues affaults upon the returne of the reproach of his enemies. Their words were as swords unto him, and his heart being made very tender and sensible of griese, these sharp words enter too deepe; and thereupon he hath recourse to his former remedie (as being the most tryed) to chide his soule and charge it to trust in God.

Cap. 1. verse 8.

Verf.10

CAP. I.
Generall Observations upon the Text.

Hence in generall weemay observe; that, Griefe gashered to a head will not be quieted at the first. We see here passions intermingled with comforts, and comforts with passions, and what bustling there is, before David can get the victorie over his owne heart: You have some short spirited Christians, that if they be not comforted at the sirst, they thinke all labour with their hearts is in vaine, and thereupon give way to their griefe. But we see in David.

Obser.I.

Cap. 1.

vid, as distemper ariseth upon distemper, so he gives check upon check, and charge upon charge to his soule, untill at length hee brought it to a quiet temper. In Physick if one purge will not carry away the vicious humour, then wee adde a second, if that will not doe it, we take a third. So should wee deale with our soules, perhaps, one check, one charge will not doe it, then fall upon the soule againe; send it to God againe, and never give over untill our soules be possessed of our soules againe.

Obser.2.

Againe, In generall observe in Davids spirit, that a gracious and living soule is most sensible of the want of spirituall meanes.

Reason

The reason is, because spirituall life hath answerable taste, and hunger and thirst after spirituals helps.

Acrius urgent que
necessitatis
sunt, quam
que speetant ad voluptatem.

Wee see in nature, that those things presse hardest upon it, that touch upon the necessities of nature, rather then those that touch upon delights; for these further onely our comfortable being; but necessities uphold our being it selfe:

Cap. 1.

felse: we see how famine wrought upon the Patriarks to go into Ægypt: Where we may see what to judge of those who willingly excommunicate themselves from the assemblies of Gods people, where the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are present, where the prayers of holy men meete together in one, and as it were binde God and pull downe Gods blessing: No private devotion hath that report of acceptance from heaven.

A third generall point is, that a godly soule by reason of the life of grace, knowes when it is well with it, and when it is ill, when it is a good day with it, and when a bad; when God shines in the use of meanes, then the soule is as it were in heaven, when God withdrawes himself, then it is in darknesse for a time. Where there is but onely a principle of nature without fanctifying grace, there men go plodding on and keep their rounds, and are at the end where they were at the beginning; not troubled with changes, because there is nothing within to be troubled; and therefore, dead means, quicke meanes, or no meanes, all is one with

Obser.3.

of praising God.

And

And then by a representation of God Cap. 1. unto him, as a saving God in al troubles, nay as salvation it selfe, an open glorious Saviour in the view of all, The Calvation of my countenance, and all this enforced from Davids interest in God. He is my God.

Whence observe, first, from the state obser.1. he was now in that fince guilt and corruption hath been derived by the fall into the nature of man, it hath been subjected to miserie and sorrow, and that in all conditions, from the King that fitteth on the Throne to him that grindeth on the Mill. None ever hath beene so good or so great as could raise themselves so high as to be above the reach of troubles.

And that choice part of mankind, the first fruits and excellency of the rest (which we call the Church) more then others, which appeares by confideration, both of the Head, the Body and members of the Church. For the Head Christ, he tooke our flesh as it was subject to miserie after the fall, and was (in regard of that which he endured) both in life and death, a man of forrowes.

For

Christ the Head was a man of many forrovves.

Cap. 1.

The Church hath beene and is full of forows.

The members of the Church have been and are ful of crofiles. For the Body the Church, It may say from the first to the last as it is Pfal. 129. From my youth up they have afflisted me. The Church beganne in blood, hath growen up by blood, and shall end in blood, as it was redeemed by blood.

For the members, they are all predeftinate to a conformitie to Christ their Head, as in grace and Glory, so in abasement Rom. 8.29. neither is it a wonder, for those that are born soldiers to meet with conflicts, for travailers to meete with hard usage, for seamen to meete with storms, for strangers in a strange country (especially amongst their enemies) to meete with strange entertainment.

A Christian is a man of another world, and here from home, which hee would forget (if he were not exercised here) and would take his passage for his country. But though all Christians agree and meete in this, that through many afflictions we must enter into heaven: Yet, according to the diversity of place parts and grace, there is a different cup measured to every one.

And

Ads 14.

And therefore it is but a plea of the flesh, to except against the Crosse, Newer was poore creature distressed as I am: this is but selfe-love, for was it not the case both of Head, Body and members, as we see here in David a principall member? When hee was brought to this case, thus to reason the matter with himselfe, Why art thou cast downe (O my soule) and why art thou disquieted within me?

From the frame of Davids spirit un. der these troubles, wee may observe, that, as the case is thus with all Gods people, to be exercised with troubles, fo, They are sensible of them oftentimes, even to casting downe and discouraging. And the reason is, they are slesh and blood subject to the same passions, and made of the same mould, subject to the same impressions from without as other men; And their nature is upheld with the same supports and refreshings as others, the withdrawing and want of which affecteth them. And besides those troubles they suffer in Common with other men, by reason of their new advancement

Cap. 1.

Obser.2.

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Cap. 2.

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advancement and their new disposition they have in and from Christ their Head, they are more sensible in a peculiar maner of those troubles that any way touch upon that blessed condition, from a new life they have in and from Christ, which will better appeare if we come more particularly to a discovery of the more speciall causes of this distemper, some of which are, I Without us. 2 Some within us.

Outward causes of discou-, ragement.

God himfelfe.

CAP. II. Of discouragements from without.

I. God himselfe: who sometimes withdrawes the beames of his countenance from his children, whereupon the soule even of the strongest Christian is disquieted; when together with the crosse, God himselfe seemes to be an enemie unto them. The child of God when hee seeth that his troubles are mixed with Gods displeasure, and perhaps his conscience tells him that God hath a just quarrell against him.

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him, because he hath not renewed his peace with his God, then this anger of God puts a sting into all other troubles, and addes to the disquiet. There were some ingredients of this divine temptation (as wee call it) in holy David at this time: though most properly a divine temptation bee, when God appeares unto us as an enemy, without any speciall guilt of any particular sin, as in lobs case.

And no marvaile if Christians bee from hence disquieted, when as the Sonne of God himselfe having alwayes before enjoyed the sweet communion with his Father, and now feeling an estrangement, that he might be a curse for us, complained in all his torments of nothing elfe; but My God, My God, why bast thou for saken me? It is with the godly in this case, as with vapours drawne up by the Sunne, which (when the extracting force of the Sunne leaves them) fall downe againe to the earth from whence they are drawn. So when the foule, raised up and upheld by the beames of his countenance, is left of God.

Cap. 2. A divine temptation, what.

Mat. 17.46

Cap. 2.

God, it presently begins to sinke. We see when the bedy of the Sun is partly hid from us (for totally it cannot in an Eclipse by the body of the Moone) that there is a drouping in the whole frame of nature: so it is in the soule, when there is any thing that comes between Gods gracious countenance and it.

In regard of Satan, who is all for casting downe.

Besides, if we looke downe to inferiour causes, the soule is oft cast down by Satan, who is all for casting downe, and for disquieting. For being a cursed spirit, cast and tumbled downe himself from heaven, where hee is never to come againe, is hereupon full of difquiet, carying a hell about himselfe, whereupon all that he labours for, is to cast downe and disquiet others, that they may bee (as much as he can procure) in the same cursed condition with himselfe. He was not ashamed to fet upon Christ himselfe with this tempration of casting downe, and thinkes Christs members never low enough, till he can bring them as low as himfelf.

The devill envies our happinesse first, and last.

By his envy and subtlety, wee were driven out of Paradice at the first, and

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now hee envies us the Paradice of a good conscience: for that is our Paradice untill wee come to heaven; into which no serpent shall ever creepe to tempt us. When Satan feeth a man strongly and comfortably walke with God, he cannot endure that a creature of meaner ranke by creation then himselfe, should enjoy such happinesse. Herein, like (some peevish men which are his instruments) men too contentious, and bred up therein (as a Salamander in the fire,) who when they know the cause to be naught, and their adverfaries to have the better title; yet (out of malice) they will follow them with fuits and vexations, though they be not able to difible their opposites title: If their malice have not a vent in hurting some way, they will burst for anger:

It is just so with the devill, when he seeth men will to heaven, and that they have good title to it, then he followes them with all dejecting and uncomfortable tentations that he can: it is his continuall trade and course to seek his rest in our disquiet, he is by beaten ora-

ctife

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Cap. 2.

ctise and profession, a temper in his kinde.

Sitans in-Hruments, who are al for casting downe.

Againe, what Satan cannot doe himfelfe by immediate suggestions, that he labours to work by his instruments, who are all for casting down of those who stand in their light, as those in the Pfalme who cry, downe with him, downe with him, even to the ground; a character and stamp of which mens dispositions, we have in the verse before this text. Mineenemies (faith David) reproach me. As sweet and as compassionate a man as hee was, to pray and put on fackcloth for them, yet he had enemies, and such enemies, as did not suffer their malice only to boile and concoct in their own breasts, but out of the abundance of their hearts, they reproached him in words. There is nothing the nature of man is more imparient of, then of reproaches: for there is no man so meane. but thinkes himselfe worthy of some

Pla.35.13.

Neither went they behind his back,

regard, and a reproachfull forn shewes an utter disrespect, which issues from

but

but were so impudent to say it to his | Cap. 2. face: a malicious heart and a slandering tongue goe together, and though shame might have suppressed the uttering of fuch words, yet their infolent cariage spake as much in Davids keart: We may see by the language of mens cariage what their heart faith, and what their tongue would vent, if ! they dared.

And this their malice was unwearied, for they said daily unto him, as if it had beene fed with a continuall spring: malice is an unsatiable monster, it will minister words, as rage ministers weapons But what was that they faid so reproachfully? and faid daily? Where is verfe 3. now thy God? they upbraid him with his fingularity, they say not now, where is God? but, where is thy God, that thou dost boast so much on? as if thou hadst some speciall interest in Him. Where we see that the scope of the devill and wicked men is to shake the godlies Faith and confidence in their God. As Satan laboured to divide betwixt Christ and his Father. If thou

Pfal.39.7.

beest

Cap. 2.

beest the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. So hee labours to divide betwixt Father, and Son, and us. they labour to bring God in jealousie with David, as if God had neglected him, bearing himselfe so much upon God. They had some colour of this, for God at this time had vailed him. selfe from David, as hee does oft from his best children for the better discovery of the malice of wicked men: And doth not Satan tippe the tongues of the enemies of Religion now, to infult over the Church now lying a bleeding? What becomes of their Reformation, of their Gospell? Nay, rather whats become of your eyes, we may say unto them? For God is nearest to his children when hee seemes furthest off. In the mount of the Lord it shall be scene, God is with them and in them, though the wicked be not aware of it; it is all one, as if one should say betwixt the space of the new and old Moone, where is now the Moone? when as it is never nearer the Sun then at that time.

Where is now thy God?

This was preached in the beginning of the troubles of the Church.

Gen.22.14

Queft.

In

In heaven, in earth, in me, every where but in the heart of such as aske such questions, and yet there they shall sinde him too in his time, filling their consciences with his wrath; and then, VVhere is their God? where are their great friends, their riches, their honors, which they set up as a god? what can they availe them now?

But how was David affected with these reproaches? their words were as swords, as with a sword in my bones, &c. they spake daggers to him, they cut him to the quicke when they toucht him in his God, as if he had neglected his servants, when as the devill himself regards those who serve his turn; touch a true godly man in his Religion, and you touch his life and his best freehold, he lives more in his God then in himselfe; so that we may see here, there is a murther of the tongue, a wounding tongue as well as a healing tongue: men think themselves freed from murther, if they kill none, or if they shed no blood, whereas they cut others to

the heart with bitter words. It is good

Cap. 2.

Vers.10

A murther of the tongue.

Cap. 2.

to extend the Commandement to awake the conscience the more, and breed humility, when men feethere is a murdering of the tongue. Wee fee David therefore upon this reproach to be presently so moved, as to fallout with himselfe for it, Why art thou so cast down and disquieted o my soule? This bitter taunt ran so much in his minde, that he expresseth it twice in this Plalme; He was sensible that they struckat God, through his fides; what they spake in scorne and lightly, hee tooke heavily. And indeed, when religion fuffers, if there be any heavenly fire in the heart, it will rather break out, then not discover it selfe at all. We see by daily experience, that there is a special force in words uttered from a subtle head, a false heart, and a smooth tongue, to weaken the hearts of profesfors, by bringing an evill report upon the strict profession of religion: as the cunning and false fies did upon the good land, as if it were not onely in vaine, but dangerous to appeare for Christ in evill times. If the example of such as have faint

I Judg 24.

faint spirits will discourage in an army (as wee see in Gideons History) then what will speech inforced both by example and with some shew of reason doe?

To let others passe, we need not goe further then our selves, for to finde causes of discouragement, there is a seminary of them within us. Our slesh, an enemy so much the worse, by how much the nearer, will be ready to upbraide us within us, where is now thy God? why shouldest thou stand out in a profession that findes no better entertainment?

Cap. 3. Iudges 7.

Difcouragement comes from our felves.

CAP. III. of discouragements from within.

But to come to some particular cau-

There is cause oft in the body of those in whom a melancholly temper prevaileth; darknesse makes men searefull: Melancholly persons are in a perpetuall darknesse, all things seeme blacke

blacke and darke unto them, their spirits as it were dyed blacke. Now to him that is in darknesse, all things seem black and dark, the sweetest comforts are not lightsome enough unto those that are deepe in melancholly. It is (without great watchfulnesse) Satans bath; which hee abuseth as his owne weapon to hurt the soule, which by reason of its sympathy with the body is subject to be missed, as we see where there is a fuffulion of the eye by reason of distemper of humours, or where things are presented through a glasse to the eye; things seeme to be of the same colour: fo, what soever is presented to a melancholly person, comes in a darke way to the foule. From whence it is that their fancy being corrupted, they judge amisse, even of outward things, as that they are sicke of such and such a disease, or subject to such and such a danger, when it is nothing fo; how fit are they then to judge of things removed from sense, as of their spirituall e-

A deluded fancy caufes disquiernesse.

Simile

2

To come to causes more neere the soule

state in Christ?

sonle it selfe, as when there is want of that which should be in it, as of knowledge in the understanding; &c. Ignorance (being darknesse) is full of false feares; In the night time men thinkevery bush a theefe; our forefathers in time of ignorance were frighted with every thing, therefore it is the policy of popish tyrants taught them from the prince of darknesse, to keep the people in darknesse, that so they might make them fearefull, and then abuse that fearefulnesse to superstition: that they might the better rule in their consciences for their owne ends; and that so having intangled them with false feares, they might heale them againe with falle cures.

Againe, though the soule be not ignorant, yet if it be forgetfull and mindlesse, if, as Heb. 12. the Apostle saith, You have forget the consolation that speaks unto you, &c. Wee have no more present actual comfort, then we have remembrance: help a godly mans memory, and help his comfort, like unto charcoale which having once been kindled,

Cap. 3. Causes privative, of discouragement in our selves.

I and Ignorance in the understanding.

Forgetfulnefle coufeth difcouragement.

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are the more easie to take fire. He that hath formerly knowne things, takes ready acquaintance of them againe (as old friends:) things are not strange to him.

Not duely prizing of comforts.

And further, want of setting due price upon comforts; as the Israelites were taxed for setting nothing by the pleasant land. It is a great fault, when (as they said to lob) the consolations of the Almighty seeme light, and small unto us, unlesse we have some outward comfort which we linger after.

Job 15.11

A childish pecvishnes.

Gen.16.

r Kings

Adde unto this, a childish kinde of peevishnesse, when they have not what they would have (like children) they throw away al; which (though it be very offensive to Gods spirit) yet it seazeth often upon men otherwise gracious. Abraham himselfe (wanting children) undervalued all other bleffings. Ionas, because hee was crossed of his gourd, was weary of his life. The like may be said of Elias, flying from Iezebel. This previshnesse is increased by a too much flattering of their griefe, so farre as to justifie it. Like Ionas, I doc well

well to be angry even unto death, he would frand to it. Some with Rachel are so peremptory, that they will not be comforted, as if they were in love with their grievances. Wilfull men are most vexed in their crosses: It is not for those to bee wilfull that have not a great measure of wisedome to guide their wils; for God delights to have his will of those that are wedded to their owne wils: as in Pharaoh. No men more subject to discontentments, then those who would have all things after their owne way.

Againe, one maine ground is, False reasoning, and errour in our discourse, as that wee have no grace when wee seele none, seeling is not alwayes a fit rule to judge our states by; that God hath rejected us, because we are crossed in outward things, when as this issues from Gods wisdome and love. How many imagine their failings, to be fallings, and their fallings, to be fallings among? Instructives to be Presumptions: every sinne against Conscience, to be the sinne against the Hely Ghost? unto which

Cap. 3. Ionah 4.9.

Ier 31.15.

False reafoning, erroneous discourse:

A double cunning of Satan, according to the humour of his patients.

which misapprehensions, weake and dark spirits are subject. And Satan (as a cunning Rhetorician) here inlargeth the fancy, to apprehend things bigger then they are, Satan abuseth confident spirits another contrary way: to apprehend great sinnes as little; and little as none. Some also, thinke that they have no grace, because they have not fo much as growen Christians: whereas, there bee severall ages in Christ. Some againe, are so desirous and inlargedafter what they have not, that they minde not what they have. Men may be rich, though they have not millions, and be not Emperors.

A fall method and order in judging of our effaces Likewise, some are much troubled, because they proceed by a false method and order in judging of their estates. They will begin with Election, which is the highest step of the ladder; whereas they should begin from a work of grace wrought within their hearts, from Gods calling them by his spirit, and their answer to his call, and so raise themselves upwards to know their Election by their answer to Gods calling.

calling. Give all diligence saith Peter to make your calling and election sure: your election by your calling. God de scends downe unto us from election to calling, and so to sandification: wee must ascend to him beginning where he ends. Otherwise it is as great folly as in removing of a pile of wood, to beginat the lowest first, and so (besides the needlesse trouble,) to be in danger to have the rest fall upon our heads. Which besides ignorance argues pride, appearing in this, that they would bring God to their conceits, and be at an end of their worke before they beginne.

This great secret of Gods eternall love to us in Christ, is hidden in his breast, and doth not appeare to us, un till in the use of meanes God by his spirit discovereth the same unto us; The spirit letteth into the soule so much life and sense of Gods love in particular to us, as draweth the soule to Christ, from whom it draweth so much vertue as changeth the frame of it, and quickneth it to duty, which duties are not grounds

Cap. 3. 2 Pet. 1.

grounds of our state in grace, but ifsues, springing from a good state before, and thus farre they helpe us, in judging of our condition, that though they bee not to bee rested in, yet as streames they lead us to the spring head of grace from whence they arise. And of signes, some be more apt to

deceive us, as being not so certaine, as

Mat.13.20

delight and joy in hearing the word, as appeareth in the third ground: some are more constant and certaine, as love to

those that are truly good, and to all such, and because they are such, &c. these as they are wrought by the spirit, so the same spirit giveth evidence to

the soule of the truth of them, and leadeth us to faith from whence they come, and faith leads us to the discove-

ry of Gods love made knowne to us in hearing the word opened. The same spirit openeth the truth to us, and our

understandings to conceive of it, and our hearts to cloze with it by faith, not only as a truth, but as a truth belong-

ing to us.

Now this faith is manifested, either

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by it selfe reflecting upon it selfe the light of faith discovering both it selfe, and other things, or by the cause of it, or by the effect, or by all; Faith is oft more knowne to us in the fruit of it. then in it selfe, as in plants the fruits are more apparant then the sappe and roote. But the most setled knowledge is from the cause, as when I know I beleeve, because in hearing Gods gracious promises opened and offered unto me, the spirit of God caryeth my soule to cleave to them as mine owne portion.Yet the most familiar way of knowledge of our estates is from the effects to gather the cause, the cause being oftentimes more remote and spirituall, the effects more obvious and visible. All the vigour and beauty in nature which we fee, comes from a fecret influence from the heavens which we fee not; In a cleare morning we may fee the beames of the Sunshining upon the top of hils and houses before wee can fee the Sun it selfe.

Things in the working of them, doe issue from the cause, by whose force D they

Cap. 3.

Eph. 7.13.

they had their being; but our knowing of things ariseth from the effect, where the cause endeth; wee know God must love us before wee can love him, and yet we oft first know that we love him; the love of God is the cause why wee love our brother, and yet we know we love our brother whom we see more clearly, then God whom we doe not see.

1 Iohn 4.

1 Iohn 4.

It is a spirituall peevishnesse that keepes men in a perplexed condition, that they neglect these helps to judge of their estates by, whereas God takes liberty to help us sometime to a discovery of our estate by the essects, sometimes by the cause, &c. And it is a sin to set light by any work of the spirit, and the comfort we might have by it, and therefore we may well adde this, as one cause of disquietnesse in many, that they grieve the spirit, by quarrelling against themselves, and the work of the spirit in them.

Comfort fought in fanctifica-

Another cause of disquiet is, that men by a naturall kinde of Popery seek for their comfort too much in sanctification, neglecting justification, relying

too

too much upon their own performances; Saint Paul was of another minde. accounting all but dung and droffe, compared to the righteousnesse of Christ. This is that garment, wherewith being decked we please our busband, and wherein we get the bleffing. This giveth satisfaction to the conscience, as satisfying God himselfe, being performed by God the Sonne, and approved therefore by God the Father; Hereupon the soule is quieted, and faith holdeth out this as a shield against the displeasure of God and temptations of Satan: why did the Apostles in their Prefaces joyne grace and peace together, but that we should seek for our peace in the free grace and favour of God in Christ.

No wonder why Papists maintaine doubting, who hold salvation by workes; because Satan joyning together with our consciences, will alwayes finde some flaw even in our best performances; Hereupon the doubting and misgiving soule comes to make this absurd demand, as, Whe shall ascend to heaven? which is all one as to fetch Christ

D 2

Cap. 3.

Phillip.3.

Pfal 24.3.

from

from heaven, and so bring him downe to fuffer on the Croffe againe. Whereas if we beleeve in Christ, wee are as fire to come to heaven as Christ is there: Christ ascending and descending with all that he hath done is ours. So that neither heighth nor depth can separate us from Gods love in Christ.

To have and maintaine true comfort, we must grow up holinesic.

fcience

railes tu-

mults in

Rom.8.39

Want of a cleare conthe foule.

But we must remember, though the maine pillar of our comfort bee in the free forgivenesse of our sinnes; yet if there be a neglect in growing in holinesse, the soule will never be soundly quiet, because it will be proane to question the truth of justification, and it is as proper for finne to raile doubts and feares in the conscience, as for rotten flesh and wood to breed wormes. And therefore we may well joyne this as a cause of disquietnesse, the neglect of keeping a cleare conscience. Sinne, like ... chan, or Ionas in the ship, is that which causeth stormes within and without; where there is not a pure conscience there is not a pacified conscience, and therefore though some thinking to falve themselves whole in justification. neglect

neglect the cleanling of their natures; and ordering of their lives : yet in time of temptation, they will finde it more troublesome then they thinke. For a conscience guilty of many neg. leds and of allowing it selfe in any fin to lay claime to Gods mercy, is to doe as we see mountebanks sometimes do. who wound their flesh to try conclusions upon their owne bodies how foveraigne the salve is; yet oftentimes they come to feele the smart of their prefumption, by long and desperate wounds. So God will let us see what it is to make wounds to try the preciousnesse of his Balme, such may goe mour. ning to their graves. And though (perhaps) with much wrastling with God, they may get assurance of the pardon of their fins, yet their conscience will bee still trembling (like as Davids though Nathan had pronounced unto him the forgivenesse of his sin)till God at length speakes further peace, even as the water of the sea (after a storme) is not presently still, but moves and trembles a good while after the storm

Pfal.51.

Gal. 6.16.

is over. A Christian is a new creature, and walketh by rule, and so far as hee walketh according to bis rule peace is upon him. Loose walkers that regard not their way, must thinke to meet with sorowes instead of peace. Watchfulnesse is the preserver of peace. It is a deep spirituall judgement to find peace in an ill way.

Ignorance of our Christian liberty.

Danger of abuling Christian liberty.

Some againe, reap the fruit of their ignorance of Christian liberty, by unnecessary scruples and doubts. It is both unthankfulnesse to God, and wrong to our selves, to be ignorant of the extent of Christian liberty; It makes melody to Satan, to see Christians troubled with that they neither should or need. Yet there is danger in stretching Christian liberty beyond the bounds. For a man may condemne himself in that he approves, as in not walking circumspectly inregard of circumstances, and so breed his owne disquiet, and give scandall to others.

Want of imployment. Sometimes also, God suffers men to be disquieted for want of imployment, who in shunning labour, procure trouble ble to themselves; and by not doing that which is needfull, they are troubled with that which is unnecessary.

An unimpleyed life is a burden to it selfe.

God is a pure Act, alwayes working, alwaies doing: and the neerer our soule comes to God, the more it is in action, and the freer from disquiet. Men experimentally feele that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them, which before they longed for, and went without; a heart not exercised in some honest labour workes trouble out of it selfe.

Againe, Omission of duties and offices of love, often troubles the peace of good people; for even in the time of death when they looke for peace and desire it most, then looking backe upon their former failings and seeing opportunity of doing good wanting to their desire; (the parties perhaps being deceased to whom they owed more respect) are hereupon much disquieted, and so much the more, because they see now hope of the like advantages cut off.

Cap. 3.

Omission of offices and duties of love.

A

Rom.13.8

Want of resolution in good things.

r Kings 18.21.

lames 1.6

A Christian life is full of duties, and the peace of it is not maintained without much fruitfulnesse and looking about us: debt is a disquieting thing to an honest minde, and duty is debt. Hereupon the Apostle layerh the charge, that we should owe nothing to any man, but love.

Againe, one speciall cause of too much disquiet, is, want of firme refolution in good things. The soule cannot but bee disquieted when it knowes not what to cleave unto, like a ship tossed with contrary windes; Halting is a deformed and troublesome gesture; so halting in religion, is not onely troublesome to others and odious, but also disquiets our selves. If God be God cleave to him: If the duties of religion be such as will bring peace of conscience at the length, be religious to purpose, practise them in the particular passages of life. Wee should labour to have a cleare judgement, and from thence a resolved purpose; a wavering minded man is inconstant in all his wayes. God will not speake peace to a staggering spirit that

that hath alwayes its religion, and its way to choose. Uncertains men are alwayes unquiet men, and giving too much way to passion maketh men in particular consultations unsetled. This is the reason why in particular cases when the matter concernes our selves, we cannot judge so clearly as in generall truths, because Satan raiseth a mist between us and the matter in question.

2. Positive Causes.

May be, 1. When men lay up their comfort too much on outward things which being subject to much inconstancy and change, breed disquiet. Vexation alwayes followes vanity, when vanity is not apprehended to be where it is. In that measure we are cast downe in the disappointing of our hopes, as wee were too much lifted up in expectation of good from them. Whence proceed these complaints; such a friend hath failed mee: I never thought to have fallen into this condition; I had fetled my joy in this childe, in this friend, &c. but this is to build our comfort upon things that have no firm founda-

When me lay up too much comfort in outward things.

Mich.2.10

36

Cap. 3.

Proveso.

Pfal.39.

It is no wonder therefore, that worldly men are oft cast downe and disquieted, when they walke in a vaine shadow, as likewise that men given much to recreations should be subject to passionate distempers, because here things fall out otherwise then they lookt for: recreations being about matters that are variable, which especially sals out in games of hazard, wherein they oft spare not Divine Providence it selfe, but break out into blasphemy.

Likewise men that graspe more bu-

finesses then they can discharge, must | Cap. 3. needs heare both the blame and the griefe of losing or marring many businesses. It being almost impossible to doe many things so well as to give content to Conscience; Hence it is that coverous and busie men trouble both their hearts and their houses; though some men from a largenesse of parts, and a speciall dexterity in affaires may turne over much; yet the most capacious heart hath its measure, and when the cup is full, a little drop may cause the rest to spill. There is a spirituall furfer, when the foule is over-charged with businesse; it is fit the soule should have its meet burthen and no more.

As likewise, those that depend too much upon the opinions of other men; A very light matter will refresh, and then againe discourage a minde that rests too much upon the liking of others. Men that feeke themselves too much abroad, finde themselves disquieted at home; even good men many times are too much troubled with the unjust censures of other men, specially in

2. Ton much relying upon the opinions of others. Sicleve fic pareum est animum quod laudis avarum, Subruit aut reficit.

r Sam.1.

in the day of their trouble: It was Iobs case; and it is a heavy thing to have affliction added to affliction: It was Hannahs case, who being troubled in spirit, was censured by Eli, for distemper in braine; but for vain men who live more to reputation then to conscience, it cannot be that they should long enjoy setled quiet, because those in whose good opinion they desire to dwell are ready often to take up contrary conceits upon slender grounds.

Too much looking and poring on evils, in our felves & abroad.

Philip.4.4

It is also a ground of overmuch trouble, when we looke too much and too long upon the ill in our felves and abroad; we may fixe our eyes too long even upon sinne it selfe; considering that we have not onely a remedy against the hurt by sinne, but a commandement to rejoyce alwayes in the Lord. Much more may we erre in poring too much upon our afflictions; wherein we may finde alwayes in our felves upon search a cause to justifie God, and alwaies something left to comfort us: Though we naturally minde more one crosse then a hundred favours, dwelling

ling overlong upon the fore.

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So likewise, our mindes may be too much taken up in consideration of the miseries of the times at home and abroad, as if Christ did not rule in the midst of his enemies; and would not help all in due time, or as if the condition of the Church in this world, were not for the most part in an afflicted and conflicting condition. Indeed there is a perfect rest both for the soules and bodies of Gods people, but that is not in this world, but is kept for hereafter, here we are in a sea, where what can wee look for, but stormes?

To infift upon no more, one cause is, that wee doe usurpe upon God, and take his office upon us, by troubling our selves in forecasting the event of things, whereas our worke is onely to doe our work and be quiet, as children when they please their parents take no further thought; our trouble is the fruit of our folly in this kinde.

That which we should observe from Vse 1. all that hath beene said is, that wee bee not overhalty in censuring others, when

Cap. 3.

when wee see their spirits out of temper, for we see how many things there are that work strongly upon the weak nature of man. Wee may sinne more by harsh censure, then they by overmuch distemper: as in lobs case, it was a matter rather of just griese and pity, then great wonder or heavy censure.

V fe 2.

And, for our selves: If our estate be calme for the present, yet wee should labour to prepare our hearts, not onely for an alteration of estate, but of spirit, unlesse wee be marvellous carefull before hand, that our spirits fall not down with our Condition. And if it befalls us to find it otherwise with our soules then at other times, we should so farre labour to beare it, as that wee doe not judge it our owne case alone, when we see here David thus to complaine of himselfe, Why art then cast downe ô my soule, &c.

CAP. IV.

Of casting downe our selves. And specially by sorow. Evills thereof.

TO returne againe to the words, Why art thou cast downe o my soule, &c. or, why dost thou cast downe thy selfe? or, art cast downe by thy selfe? Whence we may further observe, That wee are prone to cast downe our selves, wee are accessary to our owne trouble, and weave the web of our owne forow, and hamper our felves in the coards of our owne twining. God neither loves nor wills that we should be too much cast down. Wee see our Saviour Christ how carefull hee was that his Disciples should not bee troubled, and therefore hee labours to prevent that trouble which might arise by his suffering and departure from them, by a heavenly fermon; Let not your hearts bee troubled, &c. Hee was troubled himselfe that wee should not bee troubled: The ground therefore of our disquier is chiefly from our

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Obser.I.

Joh. 14.1.

selves,

Cap. 4.

selves, though Satan will have a hand in it. We see many like sullen birds in a cage beate themselves to death. This casting downe of our selves, is not from humility, but from Pride, wee must have our will, or God shall not have a good look from us, but as pettish and peevish children, we hang our heads in our bosome, because our wills are crost.

Vse.

Therefore in all our troubles wee should looke first home to our owne hearts, and stop the storme there; for wee may thanke our owne selves, not onely for our troubles, but likewise for overmuch troubling our felves in trouble. It was not the troubled condition that so disquieted Davids soule, for it hee had had a quiet minde, it would not have troubled him. But David yeelded to the discouragements of the flesh, and the flesh (so farre as it is unsubdued) is like the sea that is alwayes casting mire and dirt of doubts, discouragements and murmurings in the soule; let us therefore lay the blame where it is to be laid.

Againe,

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Againe, wee fee, it is the nature of forom to cast downe, as of joy to lift up. Griefe is like lead to the foule a heavie and cold; it finks downwards, and carries the soule with it. The poore Publican to shew that his soule was cast downe under the fight of his finnes, hung downe his head, the polition of his body was futable to the disposition of his minde, his heart and head were cast downe alike; And it is Satans practice to goe over the hedge where it is lowest: he addes more weights to the soule, by his tentations and vexations. His sinne cast him out of heaven, and by his temptations, hee cast us out of our Paradice, and ever fince, he labors to cast us deeper into sinne, wherein his scope is, to cast us either into too much trouble for finne, or prefumption in fin, which is but a lifting up, to catt vs downe into deepe despaire at length, and so at last (if Gods mercy stop not his malice) hee will cast vs as low as himselfe, even into hell it selfe.

The ground hereof is, because as the joy of the Lord doth strengthen, so doth

Cap. 4. Obser.2.

Luk 18.13

Reason.
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Whence, wee see 1. that casting downe breeds disquieting: Because it springs from pride, which is a turbulent Passion, when as men cannot stoope to that condition which God would have them in; this proceeds from discontentment, and that from pride. As we see, a vapour inclosed in a cloude causeth a terrible noise of thunder, whilst it is pent up there, and seeketh a vent; So all the noise within proceeds from a discontented swelling vapour. It is aire inclosed in the bowels of the earth which shakes it, which all the source windes cannot doe.

No creature under heaven so low cast downe as Satan, none more listed up in pride, none so sull of discord; the impurest spirits are the most disquiet and stormy spirits, troublesome to themselves and others; for when the soule leaves Go Duonce, and lookes downewards, what is there to stay it from disquiet; remoove the needle from the pole starre, and it is alwaics stirring and trembling, never quiet till it be right againe. So displace the soule

Cap. 4. Obser.I.

Reason.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 4.

by taking it from God, and it will never bee quiet. The devill cast out of heaven and out of the Church, keepes a dooe, so doe unruly spirits led by him.

Remedies against casting downe & disquieting

Now I come to the Remedies,

I. By expostulation with himselfe.

2. By laying a charge on himself. (trust in God.)

It is supposed here, that there is no reason (which the wisedome from above allowes to be a reason) why men should bee discouraged, although the wisedome from beneath which takes part with our corruption will seldome want a plea. Nay there is not onely no reason for it, but there are strong reasons against it, there being a world of evill in it.

Reasons against discouragement.

It indisposes to all good duties. For, 1. It indisposes a man to all good duties, it makes him like an instrument out of tune, and like a body out of joint, that moveth both uncomly and painfully. It unsits to duties to God, who loves a cheerefull giver, and especially a thanksgiver. Whereupon the Apostle joines them both together,

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in all things be thankfull, and rejoyce evermore. In our communion with God in the Sacraments, joy is a chiefe ingredient. So in duties to men, if the spirit be dejected, they are unwelcome, and lose the greatest part of their life and grace; A cheerefull and a free spirit in duty is that which is most accepted in duty. We observe not so much what, as from what affection a thing is done.

2. It is a great wrong to God himfelfe, and it makes us conceive blacke
thoughts of him, as if He were an enemie. What an injury is it to a gracious
father, that such whom he hath followed with many gracious evidences of
his favour and love, should be in soilla
frame, as once to call it into question?

3. So, it makes a man forgetfull of all former bleffings, and stops the influence of Gods grace, for the time prefent, and for that to come.

4. So againe, For receiving of good: It makes us unfit to receive mercies; a quiet foule is the seate of wisdome. Therefore, Meeknesse is required for the E 2 receiving

Cap. 4.

It wrongs God, making us thinke amiffe of him.

3 • It makes a manforget former bleffings, &c.

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Cap. 4.

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4. It makes us unfit to receive good.

Cap. 4. Iames 1. receiving of that ingrafted word which is able to fave our foules. Till the Spirit of God meekens the foule, (fay what you will) it mindes nothing, the foule is not empty and quiet enough to receive the feed of the word. It is ill fowing in a storme, so a stormy spirit will not suffer the word to take place, Men are deceived when they thinke a dejected spirit to be an humble spirit. Indeed it is so when wee are cast downe in the sense of our owne unworthinesse, and then as much raised up in the confidence of Gods mercy. But when wee cast our felves downe fullenly, and neglect our comforts, or undervalue them, it proceeds from pride, for it controules (as much as in us lies) the wisdome and justice of God, when we thinke with out selves, why should it be so with us: as if we were wifer to dispose of our selves then God is. It disposeth us for entertaining any temptation. Satan hath never more advantage then upon discontent.

It hinders beginners comming into Gods wayes.

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waies of God, bringing an ill report apon religion, causing men to charge it fallly for an uncofortable way, whenas men never feele what true comfort meaneth, till they give up themselves to God. And it dampes likewise the spirits of those that walk the same way with us, when as wee should (as good travellers) cheere up one another both by word and example. In such a case, the wheeles of the soule are taken off, or else, (as it were) want oyle, whereby the soule passeth on very heavily and no good action comes off from it as it should, which breeds not onely uncomfortablenesse, but unsettlednesse in good courses. For a man will never go on comfortably and constantly in that which he heavily undertakes. Thats the reason why uncheerefull spirits seldome hold out as they should. Saint Peter knew this well, and therefore he willeth that there should be quietnesse and peace between bushand and wife, that their prayers be not bindred; Infinuating that their prayers are hindered by family breaches. For by that meanes,

Pet. 3

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Cap. 5.

much as wee are quiet and cheerefull upon good grounds, so much we live, and are as it were in heaven. So much as we yeeld to discouragement, we lose so much of our life and happinesse, cheerefulnesse being (as it were) that life of our lives, and the spirit of our spirits by which they are more inlarged to receive happinesse and to expresse it.

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CAP. V.

Remedies of casting downe: To cite the soule: and present to give an account.

BUt to come to some helpes.

First, in that hee expossulates with himselfe, wee may observe, that, one may to raise a dejested soule is, to cite it before it selfe, and as it were to reason the case. God hath set up a court in mans heart, wherein, the conscience hath the office, both of Informer, accuser, witnesse, and judge; And if matters were well caryed within our selves, this prejudging would be a prevention of suture judging. It is a great mercy of

Obser.1.

The court of confcience in man. Cap. 5.

Iudgement must passe first or last without or within upon us.

of God, that the credit and comfort of man are so provided for, that hee may take up matters in himselfe, and so prevent publike disgrace. But if there be not a faire dispatch and transaction in this inferiour court within us, there will bee a review in a higher court. Therefore by flubbering over our matters, we put God and our felves to more trouble then needs. For a judgement must passe first, or last, either within us or without us, upon all unwarrantable distempers. We must not enely be ready to give an account of our faith, upon what Grounds we beleeve, but of all our actions, upon what grounds wee doe what wee doe, and of our Passions, upon what ground we are passionate, as in a well governed state, uprore and sedition is never stirred, but account must be given. Now in a mutiny the presence and speech of a venerable man, composeth the mindes of the disordered mukitude, so likewise in a mutiny of the spirit, the authority that God hath put into reason (as a beame of himselfe) commands silence, and

puts all in order againe.

And there is good reason for ir, for man is an understanding creature, and hath a rule given him to live by, and therefore is to be countable of every thought, word, action, passion. Therefore the first way to quiet the soule, is, to aske a reason of the tumult raised, and then many of our distempers for shame will not appeare, because (though they rage in filent darknesse) yet they can fay nothing for themselves, being summoned before strength of judgement and reason. Which is the reason why passionate men are loath that any court should be kept within them; but labour to stop judgement all they can. If men would but give themselves leave to consider better of it, they would never yeeld to such unreasonable motions of the soule: If they could but gaine so much of their unruly passions, as to reafon the matter within themselves, to heare what their consciences can tell them in secret, there would not be such offensive breakings out. And therefore, if we be albamed to heare others appraiding Cap. 5.
Reafin

Diftempers fall downe, when they are arraigned before Reafon.

Want of confideration, railes and maintaines our diftempers Cap. 5.

In discouragement, we crofie our own principles.

upbraidingus, let us for shame heare our felves; And if no reason can be given. what an unreasonable thing is it for a man endowed with reason to contrary his owne principles? and to be caried as a beast without reason; or if there be any reason to be given, then, this is the way to scanne it, see whether it will hold water or not. We Thall finde some reasons (if they may be so called) to be fo corrupt and foule, that (if the judgement be not corrupted by them) they dare not bee brought to light, but alwaies appeare under some colour and pretext, for fin (like the devill) is affraid to appeare in its owne likenesse, and men feek out faire glosses, for foule intentions. The hidden secret reason is one, the open is another: the heart being corrupt fets the wit a worke, to satisfie corrupt will; such kinde of men are afraid of their owne consciences (as Abab of Michaiah) because they feare it would deale truly with them: and therefore they take either present order for their consciences, or else (as Felix put off Paul) they adjorne the court

Corruption of the heart fets the wit a worke.

1 King.22

Acts 24.25

Cap. 5.

court for another time. Such menare strangers at home, afraid of nothing more then of themselves, and therefore in a fearefull condition, because they are referved for the judgement of the great day, if God doth not before that let upon them in this world. If men caried away with their own lusts, would give bur a little check, and stop themselves in their posting to hell, and alke, What have I done? What am I now about? Whither will this course tend? How will it end ? &c. Undoubtedly men would begin to be wife, Would the blasphemer give away his soule for nothing (for there is no engagement of profit or pleasure in this, as in other fins, but it issues meerly out of irreverence, and a superfluity of prophanesse;) would he (I say) draw so heavy a guilt upon himfelfe for nothing, if he would but make use of his reason? Would an old man (when he is very neare his journies end) make longer provision for a short way if he would aske himselfe a Reason? But indeed Covetous. nesse is an unreasonable vice. If

The foules expostulation.

Blaspheming whence. Cap. 5. A lefton for young men.

If those also of the younger fort, would aske of themselves, Wby God should not have the flower and marrow of their age? and why they should give their strength to the devill? It might a little take them off from the devils fervice. But finne is a worke of darknesse, and therefore shunnes not onely the light of grace, but even the light of reason. Yet sinne seldome wants a feeming reason, Men will not goe to hell without a shew of reason. But such be sophisticall fallacies, not reasons; and therefore sinners are said to play the sophisters with themselves, Satan could not deceive us, unlesse wee deceived our selves fir ft, and are willingly deceived: wilfull sinners are blinde, because they put out the light of reason, and so thinke God (like themselves) blinde too; and therefore they are defervedly termed mad men and fooles; for, did they but make use of that spark

of reason, it would teach them to reason thus; I cannot give an account of my wages to my selfe: what account shall I, or can I give then, to the judge of all flesh ere

Sin is unreasonable so much the more, as without reason, it pretends reasons.

Pia.50.

it be long?

And

And as it is a ground of repentance in stopping our course to ask what have I done? So likewise of faith and new obedience, to aske what shall I doe for the time to come? and then upon setling, the soule in way of thankes, will be ready to aske of it selfe, What shall I returne to the Lord? &c. So that the soule by this dealing with it selfe promoteth it selfe to all holy duties till it come to heaven.

The reason why wee are thus backward to the keeping of this court in our selves, is selfelove: we love to flatter our owne affections, but this selfelove, is but selfe-harred in the end; (as the wiseman saies) he that regards not this part of wisdome, bates his owne soule, and shall ease the fruits of his owne wayes.

2. As likewise it issues from an irksomuelle of labour, which makes us rather willing to seeme base and vile to
our selves and others, then to take
paines with our owne hearts to be berter, as those that are weary of holding
the reines, give them up unto the horse
necke, and so are driven whither the

Cap. 5.

Reaf. I.
Why wee are to backward to keepe court in our felves.
Proverbs

Irkfomeneffe of labour.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 5.

1 Cor.11.

31.

rage of the horse caryeth them: sparing a little trouble at first, doubles it in the end; as he who will not take the paines to cast up his bookes, his bookes will cast up him in the end. It is a bleffed trouble that brings sound and long peace: This labour saves God a labour, for therefore he judgeth us, because wee would not take paines with our selves before.

3. Pride. 3. And Pride also, with a desire of liberty, makes men thinke it to be a diminishing of greatnesse and freedome, either to be curbed, or to curbe our selves: We love to be absolute, and independant; but this, as it brought ruine upon our nature in Adam; so it will upon our persons. Men (as Luther was wont to say) are borne with a Pope in their belly, they are loath to give an account, although it be to themselves, their wils are instead of a kingdome to them.

Mens mili

Let us therefore (when any lawlesse passions begin to stir) deale with our soules as God did with sonah; Doest thon well to be angry? to fret thus? This will be a meanes to make us quiet. For, alas,

what

Jenah 4.

what weake reasons have we often of | Cap. 5. strong motions; such a man gave mee no respect, such another lookt more kindly upon another man then upon me.&c. You have some of Hamans spirit, that for a little neglect, would ruine a whole nation. Passion presents men that are innocent as guilty to us, and because we will not seeme to bee mad without reason, Pride commands the wir, to justifie anger, and so one Passion maintaines and feeds another.

Neither is it sufficient to eite the soule before it selfe; but, it must be pressed to give an account, as we see here, David doubles, and trebles the expostulation; as oft as any distemper did arise, so oft did he labour to keep it downe. If pafsions grow too insolent, Elies mildnesse will doe no good. It would prevent much trouble in this kinde, to subdue betimes (in our selves and others) the first beginnings of any unruly passions and affections; which (if they be not well tutord and disciplined at the first) prove as headstrong, unruly and illnurtured, children, who (being not chastened

Efther s.

Facit ira mocentes.

Obser.2.

r Sam. 2.

Cap. 5.

Pro.29.15.

stened in time) take such a head, that it is (oft) above the power of parents to bring them in order. A childe set at liberty (saith Salomon) breeds shame (at length) to his parents. Adonizeths example shewes this. The like may be said of the affections set at liberty; It is dangerous to redeeme a little quiet by yeelding to our affections which is never safely gotten but by mortification of them.

Those that are in great place, are most in danger, by yeelding to themfelves, to loofe themselves, for they are so taken up with the person for a time put upon them, that they, both in look, and speech, and carriage, often shew that they forget both their naturall condition as men, and much more their supernaturall as Christians; and therefore are scarce counsellable by others or themselves, in those things that concerne their fevered condition that concerneth another world. Whereas it were most wisdome so to think of their place they beare, whereby they are called gods, as not to forget they must lay

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their person aside, and die like men: David himselfe that in this afflicted condition could advise with himselfe, and checke himselfe, yet in his free and flourishing estate neglected the counsell of his triends. Agur was in jealousie of a full condition, and lest instead of saying, what have I done; why am I thus cast downe, &c? he should say, Who is the Lord?

Meaner men in their lesser sphære, often shew what their spirits would be, if their compasse were inlarged.

It is a great fault in breeding youth, for feare of taking downe of their spirits, not to take downe their pride, and get victory of their affections; whereas a proud unbroken heart raiseth us more trouble often then all the world beside. Of all troubles, the trouble of a proud heart is the greatest; It was a great trouble to Haman to lead Mordecaies horse, which another man would not have thought so; the moving of a straw is troublesome to proud flesh. And therefore it is good to beart the

Joake from our youth, It is better to bee

Cap. 5.

Prov.30.9.

Efther 6,1.

Lam. 3.27.

Cap. 5.

taken downe in youth, then to be broken in pieces by great croffes in age. First or last, selfe-deniall and victory over our selves is absolutely necessary; otherwise faith which is a grace that requireth selfe-deniall, will never bee brought into the foule, and beare rule there.

Quest. Answ.

But, what if pressing upon our soules will not help?

Then speake to God, to Jesus Christ by prayer, that as hee rebuked the windes and the waves, and went upon the Sea, so hee would walke upon our soules and command a calme there. It is no lesse power to settle a peace in the foule, then to command the seas to be quiet. It is Gods prerogative torule in the heart, as likewise to give it up to it selfe, which (next to hell) is the greatest judgement; which should draw us to the greater reverence and feare of difpleasing God. It was no ill wish of him, that defiredGod, to free him from an ill man, himselfe.

Domine libera me a male homimeipso.

CAP.

if it be not stopped: There is nothing in him to stay him in falling, as we see in Achitophel, and Saul: who (wanting a support) found no other stay, but the swords point. And the greater their parts and places are, the more they intangle themselves; and no wonder, for they are to encounter with God and his deputy conscience, who is

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2 Sam. 17.

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King of Kings and Lord of Lords When Cain was cast out of his fathers house, his heart and countenance was alwaies cast downe, for, he had nothing in him to lift it upwards. But a godly man, though he may give a little way to passion, yet (as David) he recovers himselfe. Therefore as we would have any good evidence, that we have a better spirit in us then our owne, greater then the slesh or the world, Let us (in all troubles we meet with) gather up our selves, that the streame of our own affections cary us not away too farre.

There is an art of bearing troubles.

There is an art or skill of bearing troubles, (If we could learne it) without overmuch troubling of our selves; As in bearing of a burden there is a way so to poize it, that it weigheth not over heavy: If it hanges all in one side, it powers the body downe. The greater part of our troubles we pull upon our selves; by not parting our care so, as to take upon us onely the care of daty, and leave the rest to God; and by mingling our passions with our crosses; & (like a so lish patient) chew-

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ing the pills which we should swallow downe. We dwell too much upon the griefe, when wee should remove the soule higher. Wee are nearest neighbours unto our selves; when we suffer griefe (like a canker) to eate into the soule; and (like a fire in the bones) to consume the marrow and drink up the spirits: we are accessary to the wrong done both to our bodies and soules: we wast our owne candle, and put out our light.

We see here againe, that a godly man can make a good use of Privacy. When he is forced to be alone, he can talke with his God and himselfe; one reason whereof is, that his heart is a treasury and storehouse of divine truthes, whence he can speake to himselfe, by way of checke, or incouragement of himselfe: he hath a spirit over his own spirit, to teach him to make use of that store he hath laid up in his heart, the spirit is never neerer him then when by way of witnesse to his spirit he is thus comforted; wherein the childe of God differs from another man, who cannot

Lap. o.

obser.4.

The cause why wicked men cannot endure solitarinesse.

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endure

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endure solitarinesse, because his heart is empty; he was a stranger to God before, and God is a stranger to him now. So that hee cannot goe to God as a friend: And for his conscience, that is ready to speake to him, that which he is loath to heare: and therefore, hee counts himselfe a torment to himselfe, especially in privacy.

AsCharles theninth afterthe Maffacra in France. Thuanes li. 57. Sommis post casum Sanbartho-Lomeum vo-Eturni borroresplerumque interrumpefant or yur. us adhibiti (vinp) oniaci espergefacto concellatant.

We read of great Princes who after some bloody designes, were as terrible to themselves as they were formerly to others, and therefore could never endure to be awaked in the night, without Musique, or some like diversion. It may bee, wee may bee cast into such a condition, (where we have none in the world to comfort us) as in contagious ficknesse, when none may come neare us, we may be in such an estate wherein no friend will owne us. And therefore let us labour now to bee acquainted with God and our owne hearts and acquaint our hearts with the comforts of the holy Ghost, then, though wee have not fo much as a booke to looke on, or a friend to talke with, yet wee

may looke with comfort into the book of our own heart, and reade what God hath written there by the finger of his spirit: all bookes are written to amend this one booke of our heart and conscience; by this meanes we shall never want a Divine to comfort us, a Physician to cure us, a Counseller to direct us, a Musician to cheare us, a Controller to check us, because (by help of the word and spirit) we can be all these to our selves.

Another thing we see here, that God hath made every man a Governour over himselfe. The poore man that hath none to governe him, yet may bee a King in himselfe. It is the naturall ambition of mans heart to desire governement, as we see in the Bramble: Well then, let us make use of this disposition, to rule our selves. Absolom had high thoughts; O, If I were a King, I would doe so and so. So our hearts are ready to promise, if I were as such and such a man, in such and such a place, I would doe this and that.

But how dost thou manage thine owne

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Ideo scribantur omnes libri ut emendetur unus.

obser.5.

Iudges 9.

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Mat.25.21

Pro.16.32.

owne affections? how dost thou rule in thine owne house? in thy selfe? doe nor passions get the upper hand, and keepe reason under foot? When wee have learned to rule over our owne spirits well, then we may be fit to rule over others. He that is faithfull in a little, shall be set over more. Hee that can governe bimselfe (In the Wise-mans judgement) is better then he that can gowerne a City. Hee that cannot, is like a Citie without a wall, where those that are in may goe out, and the enemies without, may come in at their pleasure. So where there is not a government fet up, there finne breaks out, and Satan breaks in without controule.

Obser.6.

All outward troubles are for to helpe the foule.

See againe, the excellency of the foule, that can reflect upon it felfe, and judge of what seever comes from it: A godly mans care and trouble is especially about his soule, as David here looks principally to that, because all outward troubles are for to helpe that; when God touches our bodies, our estates, or our friends, hee aimes at the soule in all. God will never remove his hand.

hand, till something be wrought upon the soule, as Davids moisture was as the drought in Summer, so that hee roared, and carried himselfe unfeemely (for fo great and holy a man) till his heart was subdued to deale without all guile with God in confessing his sinne, and then GoD forgave him the iniquitie thereof, and healed his body too. In ficknesse, or in any other trouble. It is best the Divine should bee before the Physician: and that men begin where Godbegins. In great fires men looke first to their Jewels, and then to their lumber; so our soule is our best Jewel: A carnall worldly man, is called, (and well called) a fleshly man, because his very soule is flesh, and there is nothing but the world in him. And therefore, when all is not well within, hee cries

The possession of the soule is the richest possession, no jewell so precious: the account for our owne soules,

out, My Body is troubled, my state is broken, my friends faile me, &c. but all this while, there is no care for the poor

and

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Pfalm.32.

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and the soules of others, is the greatest account, and therefore the care of foules should bee the greatest care: What an indignity is it that we should forget such soules to satisfie our lusts? to have our wils? to bee vexed with any, who by their judgement, example, or authority, stopp as we suppose our courses. Is it not the greatest plot of the world; First to have their lusts satisfied: Secondly, to remove either by fraud or violence what soever standeth in their way: And thirdly, to put colours and pretences upon this to delude the world & themselves, imploying all their carnall wit and worldly strength for their carnall aimes, and fighting for that which fights against their owne foules? For what will bee the issue of this but certaine destruaion?

Of this minde are not onely the dregs of people, but many of the more refined fort, who defire to be eminent in the world; And to have their owne defires herein, give up the liberty of their owne judgements and conscien-

ces,

ces, to the defires and lusts of others; to bee above others they will bee beneath themselves; having those mens persons in admiration for hope of advantage, whom otherwise they despise, and so substituting in their spirits, man in the place of GOD, lose heaven for earth, and bury that divine sparke (their foules) capable of the Divine nature, and fitter to be a fanctuary and temple for God to dwell in, then by clozing with baser things to become base it felfe. We need not wonder that others feeme base to carnall men, who are base both in and to themselves. It is no wonder they should bee cruell to the foules of others, who are cruell to their owne foules, that they should neglect and starve others, that give away their owne foules in a manner for nothing. Alas upon what poore termes do they hazard that, the nature and worth whereof is beyond mans reach to comprehend. Many are so carelesse in this kinde, that if they were throughly perswaded that they had soules that should live for ever, (either in blisse or torment)

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work upon them. But as they live by sense, as beasts, so they have no more thoughts of suture times then beasts, except at such times as conscience is awaked by some suddaine judgement, whereby Gods wrath is revealed from heaven against them. But happy were it for them, if they might die like beasts, whose miserie dies with them.

To such an estate hath sinne brought the soule, that it willingly drowneth it selfe in the senses, and becomes in some sort incarnate with the sless.

Wee should therefore set our selves to have most care of that, which God cares most for: which he breathed intous at first, set his owne image upon, gave so great a price for, and values above all the world besides. Shall all our study beento satisfie the desires of the sless, and neglect this?

Is it not a vanity to preferre the casket before the jewel, the shell before the pearle, the silded potsheard before the treasure and is it not much more vanitie to preferre the outward condition

condition before the inward? The Cap. 6. fonle is that which Saran and his hath most spite at, for in troubling our bodies or estates, hee aimes at the vexation of our foules.' As in 10b, his aime was to abuse that power God had given him over His children, body and goods, to make him out of a disquieted spirit blaspheme God. It is an ill method to beginne our care in other things, and neglect the foule, as Achitophel, who fee his house in order, when hee should have fet his soule in order first. Wisedome begins at the right end. If all bee well at home, it comforts a man, though he meers with troubles abroad. Oh (faith he) I shall have rest arhome, I have a loving wife and dutifull children; so whatshever we meet withall abroad, if the foule be quiet, thithet we can retire with comfort. See that all bee well within, and then all troubles from without carinot much appoy us.

Grace will teach us to reason thus, God hath given mine enemies power over my liberty and condition, but

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shall they have power and liberty over my spirit? It is that which Satan and they most seeke for, but never yeeld, Oh my soule. And thus a godly man will become more then a conquerer; when in appearance hee is conquered, the cause prevailes, his spirit prevailes and is undaunted. A Christian is not subdued till his spirit be subdued. Thus 106 prevailed over Sathan and all his troubles at length. This tormenteth proud persons to see godly menenjoy a calme and resolute frame of minde in the midst of troubles; when their enemies are more troubled in troubling them then they are in being troubled by them.

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Wee see likewise here, how to frame our complaints: David complaines not of God, nor of his troubles, nor of others, but of his owne soule, hee complaines of himselfe, to himselfe. As if he should say; Though all things else be out of order, yet 0 my soule thou shouldst not trouble mee too: thou shouldst not betray thy selfe unto troubles, but rule over them. A godly man complaines to God, yet

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yet not of God, but of himselfe; a carnall man is ready to justifie himselfe, and complaine of God. He complaines not to God, but of God (at the least) in secret murmuring: hee complaines of others that are but Gods violls; hee complaines of the grievance that lies upon him, but never regards what is amisse in himselfe within: Openly he cries out upon fortune, yet secretly he strikethat God, under that Idoll of fortune, by whose guidance all things comes to passe, whilst he quarrells with that which is nothing hee wounds him that is the cause of all things: like a gouty man that complaines of his thooe, and of his bed; or an aguish man, of his drinke, when the cause is from within. So men are disquieted with others, when they should rather bee disquieted and angry with their owne hearts.

We condemne *Ionas* for contending with God, and justifying his unjust anger, but yet the same risings are in men naturally, if shame would suffer them to give vent to their secret discontent;

their

I.Sam. 16. Matt. 27.3.	their heart speakes what longs tongue spake. Oh, but here we should lay our hand upon our mouth and adore God, and command silence to our soules. No man is hurt but by himselfe sirst; Wee are drawen to evill, and allured from a true good to a false by our owne lusts, God tempts no man. Satan hath no power over us further then wee willingly lie open to him, Satan workes upon our affections, and then our affections worke upon our will. Hee doth not worke immediatly upon the will; wee may thanke our selves in willingly yeelding to our owne passions, for all that ill Satan or his instruments drawes us unto; Saul was not vexed with an evill spirit, till he gave way to his owne evill spirit of envy first. The devill entred not into Iudas untill his covetous heart made way for him. The Apostle
	evill spirit of envy first. The devill en-
Ephel.4.	and lasting anger from hence, that by this wee give way to the devill. It is a dangerous thing to passe from Gods government, and come under Satans. Satan mingleth himselfe with our owne

The Soules Conflict.

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owne passions, therefore wee should blame our selves first, bee ashamed of our selves most, and judge our selves most severely. But selfe-love teacheth us a contrary method; to translate all upon others; it robs us of a right judgement of our selves. Though we defire to know all diseases of the body by their proper names, yet wee will conceive of finfull passions of the soule under milder termes; as luft under love. rage under just anger, murmuring under just displeasure, &c. thus whilest wee flatter our griefe, what hope of cure! Thus sinne hath not onely made all the creatures enemies to us, but our selves the greatest enemies to our selves, and therefore wee should begin our complaints against our selves, & discusse our selves throughly; how else shal we judge truly of other things without us, above us, or beneath us? The Sun when it rifes enlightens first the nearest places, and then the more remote; So where true light is fee up, it discovers what is amisse within first.

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Hence also wee see, that as in all dif- obser.8. COHTAGE-G 2

78	The Soules Conflict.
78 Cap. 6. Obser.8.	couragements a godly man hath most treuble with his owne heart, so her knowes how to carry himselfe therein, as David doth here. For the better clearing of this, wee must know there bee divers kinds and degrees of conslicts in the soule of man, whilst it is united to the body. First, betweene one corrupt Passion and another, as betweene Covetons nesse and Pride; Pride calls for expence, Covetousnesse fight not onely against God and reason, to which they owe a homage, but one against another; Sinne fights against sinne, and a lesser sinne is oftentimes overcome by a greater. The soule in this case, is like the Sea tossed with
2.	contrary windes; and like a kingdome divided, wherein the subjects fight both against their Prince, and one against another. Secondly, there is a natural conflict in the Affections whereby Nature seekes to preserve it selfe, as betwixt anger and feare; Anger cals for revenge, Feare of the law bindes the soule to be quiet. Wee

Wee see in the creatures, feare makes them abstaine from that which their appetites carry them unto. A Wolfe comes to a slock with an eagernesse to prey upon it, but seeing the Shepheard standing in defence of his sheepe, returnes and doth no harme, and yet for all this as hee came a wolfe, so hee returnes a wolfe.

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A natural man may oppose some sin from an obstinate resolution against it, not from any love of God, or hatred of sin, as sin, but because he conceives it a brave thing to have his will. As one hard weapon may strike at another, as a stone wall may beate backe an arrow; but this opposition is not from a contrariety of nature, as is betwixt fire and water.

Thirdly, there is a conflict of a higher nature, as between some sinnes and the light of reason helped by a naturall conscience. The Heathen could reason from the dignity of the soule, to count it a base thing to prostitute themselves to beastly lusts, so as it were degrading and unmanning themselves. Naturall

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men desirous to maintaine a great opinion of themselves, and to awe the in. feriour fort by gravity of deportment in cariage, will abstaine from that, which otherwise their hearts carry them unto, lest yeelding should render them despised, by laying themselves too much open; as because passion dis covers a foole as hee is, and makes a wise man thought meaner then he is, therefore a prudent man will conceale his passion. Reason refined and raised by education, example, and custome, doth breake in some degree the force of naturall corruption, and brings into the foule, as it were, another nature, and yet no true change; as we fee in such as have beene inured to good courses, they feele conscience checking them upon the first discontinuance and alteration of their former good wayes, but this is usually from a former impression of their breeding, as the boate moves some little time upon the water by vertue of the former stroke, yet at length we see corruption prevailing over education, as in loas, who was was awed by the reverent respect he bare to his uncle Iehojoda, he was good all his uncles dayes: And in Nero, in whom the goodnesse of his education prevailed over the siercenesse of his nature, for the first five yeares.

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Fourthly, but in the Church, where there shineth a light above nature, as there is a discovery of more sinnes, and fome strength, with the light, to performe more duty; So there is a further conflict then in a man that hath no better then nature in him. By a discovery of the excellent things of the Goffell, there may be some kinde of joy stirred up, and some degree of obedience: whence there may be some degree of refistance against the sinnes of the Gospell, as obstinate unbeleefe, desperation, prophanesse, &c. A man in the Church may doe more then another out of the Church, by reason of the inlargement of his knowledge; whereupon such cannot sinne at so easie a rate as others that know leffe, and (therefore) meet with lesse opposition from conscience.

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Fiftly, there is yet a further degree of conflict betwixt the fanctified powers of the foule, and the flesh, not one. ly as it is feated in the baser parts, but even in the best faculties of the soule. and as it mingles it felf with every gracious performance; (as in David) There is not onely a conflict betwixt sin and conscience, inlightned by a common worke of the Spirit; but betweene the commanding powers of the foule san. ctified, and it selfe unsanctified, between reasons of the flesh and reasons of the firit, betweene faith and distrust, betweene the true light of knowledge, and falle light. For it is no question but the flesh would play its part in David, and muster up all the strength of reason it had. And usually flesh, as it is more ancient then the Spirit, (we being first naturall, then spirituall) so it will put it felfe first forward in devising thifts, as Esau comes out of the wombe first before Iacob; yet hereby the Spirit is stirred up to a present examination and refistance, and in resisting (as wee see here) at length the godly gets the victory.

victory. As in the conflict betweene the higher parts of the soule with the lower, it clearely appeares, that the soule doth not rise out of the temper of the body, but is a more noble substance, commanding the body by reasons fetched from its owne worth; so in this spiritual conflict, it appeares there is something better then the soul it selfe, that hath superiority over it.

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CAP. VII.

Difference between good men and others in conflicts with sinne.

But how doth it appeare that this combate in David was a spirituall combate?

First, A natural conscience is troubled for sins against the light of nature onely, but David for inward and secret corruptions, as discouragement and disquietnesse arising from faint trusting in God.

Davids conflict was not onely with the fenfuall lower part of his foulc, which Quest.

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which is carried to ease and quiet, and love of present things, but hee was troubled with a mutiny in his understanding, betweene faith and distrust; and therefore hee was forced to rouze up his soule so oft to trust in Gad; which shews that carnall reason did solicite him to discontent, and had many colourable reasons for it.

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Secondly, a man indued with common grace, is rather a patient then an agent in conflicts; the light troubles himagainst his will, as discovering and reproving him, and hindring his finfull contentments; his heart is more byased another way if the light would let him; but a godly man labours to helpe the light, and to worke his heart to an opposition against sinne; he is an agent as well as a patient. As David here doth not suffer disquieting, but is disquieted with himselfe for being so. A godly man is an agent in opposing his corruption, and a patient in induring of it: whereas a naturall man is a secret agent in and for his corruptions, and a patient in regard of any helpe against them;

them; A good man suffers evill and Cap. 7. doth good, a naturall man suffers good and doth evill.

Thirdly, A conscience guided by common light, withstands distempers most by outward meanes, but David here fetcheth helpe from the Spirit of God in him, and from trust in God. Nature works from within, so doth the new nature; David is not onely something disquieted, and something troubled for being disquieted, but sets himselfe throughly against his distempers; hee complaines, and expostulates, hee censures, and chargeth his soule. The other, if hee doth any thing at all, yet it is faintly; he seeks out his corrupti-

Fourthly, David withstands sinne constantlie and gets ground. Wee see here, he gives not over at the first, but presseth againe and againe. Nature works constantly, so doth the new nature. The conflictinthe other is something forced, as taking part with the worfer

on as a coward doth his enemie, loth to finde him, and more loth to encounter

with him.

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worfer side in himselfe, good things have a weak, or rather no party in him, bad things a strong; and therefore hee soone gives over in this holy quarrell.

5.

Fiftly, David is not discouraged by his foiles, but sets himselfe afresh against his corruptions, with confidence to bring them under. Whereas he that hath but a common work of the Spirit, after some foiles, lets his enemy prevaile more and more, and so despaires of victory, and thinks it better to fit still, then to rise and take a new fall; by which meanes his later end is worfe then his beginning, for beginning in the Spirit, he ends in the flesh. A godly man, although upon some foile, he may for a time bee discouraged, yet by holy indignation against sinne, he renues his force, and fets afresh upon his corruptions, and gathers more ftrength by his falls, and groweth into more acquaintance with his owne heart, and Satans malice, and Gods strange waies in bringing light out of darkneffe.

Six:ly, An ordinary Christian may be disquieted for being disquieted, as

David

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David was, but then it is onely as difquiet hath vexation in it; but David here striveth against the unquietnesse of his spirit, not onely as it brought vexation with it, but as it hindred communion with his God.

In sinne there is not onely a guilt binding over the soule to Gods judgement, and thereupon filling the foule with inward feares and terrors; but in sinne likewise there is, 1. a contrarietie to Gods holy nature; and, 2. a contrariety to the Divine nature and image stamped upon our selves; 3. a weakning and disabling of the soule from good; and, 4. a hindring of our former communion with GoD, sinne being in its nature a leaving of God the fountaine of all strength and comfort, and cleaving to the creature; hereupon the foule having tafted the sweetnesse of G o D before, is now grieved, and this grief is not onely for the guilt and trouble that sinne drawes after it. but from an inward Antipathy and contrariety betwixt the sanctified soule and sinne. It hates sinne as sinne, as the

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onely bane and poyfon of renewed nature, and the onely thing that breedes ftrangenesse betwixt God & the soule. And this hatred, is not so much from discourse and strength of reason, as from nature it felfe rising presently against its enemie; The Lambe presently shuns the Wolfe from a contrariety; Antipathies wait not for any strong reason, but are exercised upon the first presence of a contrary object.

Seventhly, hereupon ariseth the last difference; that because the soule hateth sinne as sinne, therefore it oppofeth it univerfally and eternally, in all the powers of the foule, and in all actions inward and outward iffuing from those powers, David regarded no iniquity in his beart, but bated every evill may. The defires of his soule were, that it might be so directed that be might keepe Gods law. And if there had beene no binding law, yet there was such a sweet sympathy and agreement betwixt his foule and Gods truth, that he delighted

init above all naturall sweetnesse; Hence it is that Saint Iohn faith, He that is borne

Pfal.66. 18

Pfal,119.5

1 Ich.3.9.

of God cannot sinne, that is so farre forth Cap. 7. as he is borne of God; his new nature will not suffer him, he cannot lie, he cannot deceive, he cannot be earthly minded. hee cannot but love and delight in the persons & things that are good. There is not onely a light in the understanding, but a new life in the will, and all other faculties of a godly man; what good his knowledge discovereth, that his will makes choice of, and his heart loveth; What ill his understanding discovers, that his will hateth and abstaines from. But in a man not through. ly converted, the will and affections are bent otherwise, he loves not the good he doth, nor hates the evill hee doth not.

Therefore let us make a narrow fearch into our foules upon what grounds wee oppose finne, and fight Gods battells. A common Christian is not cast downe, because hee is disquieted in Gods service, or for his inward failings, that he cannot serve God with that liberty & freedome he desires, & c: But a godly man is troubled for his di-

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Cap. 7.

onely bane and poyfon of renewed nature, and the onely thing that breedes strangenesse betwixt God & the soule. And this hatred, is not so much from discourse and strength of reason, as from nature it felfe rifing presently against its enemie; The Lambe presently shuns the Wolfe from a contrariety: Antipathies wait not for any strong reason, but are exercised upon the first

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init above all naturall meetnesse; Hence it is that Saint Iohn faith, He that is borne

1 Ich.3.9.

of God cannot sinne, that is so farre forth Cap. 7. as he is borne of God; his new nature will not suffer him, he cannot lie, he cannot deceive, he cannot be earthly minded. hee cannot but love and delight in the persons & things that are good. There is not onely a light in the understanding, but a new life in the will, and all other faculties of a godly man; what good his knowledge discovereth, that his will makes choice of, and his heart loveth; What ill his understanding discovers, that his will hateth and abstaines from But in a man not through. ly converted, the will and affections are bent otherwise, he loves not the good he doth, nor hates the evill hee doth not.

Therefore let us make a narrow fearch into our foules upon what grounds wee oppose finne, and fight Gods battells. A common Christian is not cast downe, because hee is disquieted in Gods service, or for his inward failings, that he cannot serve God with that liberty & freedome he desires, & c: But a godly man is troubled for his di-

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stempers, because they hinder the comfortable intercourse betwixt God and his foule, and that spirituall composednesse, and Sabbath of spirit which hee enjoyed before, and defires to enjoy againe. Hee is troubled that the waters of his soule are troubled so, that the image of Christ shines not in him as it did before. It grieves him to finde an abatement in affection, in love to God, a distraction or coldnesse in performing duties, any doubting of Gods favour, any discouragement from dutie,&c. A godly mans comforts and grievances are hid from the world; naturall men are strangers to them. Let this be a rule of discerning our estates, how wee stand affected to the distempers of our hearts; If wee finde them troublesome, it is a ground of comfort unto us that our Spirits are ruled by a higher spirit; and that there is a principle of that life in us, which cannot brooke the most secret corruption, but rather casts it out by a holy complaint, as strength of nature doth poyfon, which seekes its destruction. And let

let us bee in love with that worke of grace in us, which makes us out of love with the least stirrings that hinder our best condition.

See againe, We may be finfully disquie. ted for that which is not a sinne to be disquieted for. David had sinned if he had not beene somewhat troubled for the banishment from Gods house, and the blasphemie of the enemies of the Church; But yet (wee see) hee stops himselfe, and sharply takes up his soule for being disquieted: Hee did well in being disquieted, and in checking himselfe for the same; there were good grounds for both: He had wanted spirituall life if he had not beene disquieted. Hee abated the vigour and livelinesse of his life, by being over-much disquieted.

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that by these troubles God is dishostoured, the publike exercises of Religion hindred, and the gathering of soules thereby stopped: As, the States and Common-wealths which should be harbours of the Church, are disturbed; as lawlesse courses and persons prevaile; as Religion and Justice is triumphed over, and trodden under. Men usually are grieved for publique miseries from a spirit of selfe-love only, because their owne private is imbarqued in the publique. There is a depth of deceit of the heart in this matter.

3. So for the measure, when wee trouble our selves (though not without

cause) yet without bounds.

The spirit of man is like unto moist elements, as ayre and water, which have no bounds of their owne to containe them in, but those of the vessell that keepes them: water is spilt and lost without something to hold it; so it is with the spirit of man, unlesse it be bounded with the Spirit of God. Put the case a man be disquieted for sinne (for which not to be disquieted is a sin)

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which taketh away the free use of reason, and exercise of grace more then any other griese, then much more in griese from more remote causes, for in extremity of body the sicknesse may be such, as all that wee can performe to God is a quiet submittion, and a desire to bee carried unto Christ by the prayers of others; we should so minde our griese as not to forget Gods mercy, or our owne duty.

Secondly, when wee forget the grounds of comfort, & fuffer our minde to runne onely upon the present grievance, it is a finne to dwell on finne and turmoile our thoughts about it, when we are called to thankfulnesse. A Physitian in good discretion forbids a dish at sometimes to prevent the nourishment of some disease, which another time hee gives way unto. So wee may and ought to abstaine from too much feeding our thoughts upon our corruptions in case of discouragement, which at other times is very necessary. It should be our wisedome in such cases to change the object, and labour to take Cap. 8.

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Cap. 8.

3.

Thirdly, Griefe is too much, when it inclines the foule to any inconvenient courses: (for if it bee not lookt to it is an ill counsellor) when either it hurts the health of our bodies, or drawes the soule (for to ease it selfe) to some unlawfull liberty. When grief keeps such a noise in the soule, that it will not heare what the messengers of God, or the still voice of the Spirit faith, as in combustions, loud cries are scarce heard: so in such cases the soule will neither heare it selfe, nor others. The fruit of this overmuch trouble of spirit, is increase of trouble.

3. Another question may bee, What that sweet and holy temper is, the Soule should be in, that it may neither bee faulty in the defect, nor too much abound in griefe and sorow.

1. The soule must bee raised to a Answ.

right griefe.

2. The griefe that is raised, though it bee right yet it must bee bounded. Before wee speake of raising griefe in the H 4

Cap. 8.

the godly, wee must know there are some who are altogether strangers to any kinde of spirituall griefe, or trouble at all; such must consider, that the way to prevent everlasting trouble, is to desire to be troubled with a preventing trouble. Let those that are not in the way of grace thinke with themselves what cause they have, not to take a minutes rest while they are in that estate. For a man to bee in debt both body and foule, subject every minute to be arrested and caried prisoner to Hell, and not to bee moved: For a man to have the wrath of Go D ready to bee powred out upon him, and Hell gape for him, nay to cary a hell about him in conscience (if it were awake) and to have all his comfort here hanging upon a weake threed of this life ready to bee cut and broken off every moment, and to bee curfed in all those bleffings that he enjoyes: and yet not to be disquieted, but continually trea furing up wrath against the day of wrath, by running deeper into Gods books: for a man to bee thus, and not to bee disquieted, is but the Devills Cap. 8. peace, whilest the strong man holds possession: A burning Ague is more hopefull than a Lethargy; The best service that can be done to such men, is to startle and rouze them, and so with violence to pull them out of the fire (as Iude speakes) or else they will another day curse that cruell mercy that lets them alone now. In all their jollity in this world, they are but as a Booke fairely bound, which when it is opened is full of nothing but Tragedies. So when the booke of their consciences shall be once opened, there is nothing to bee read but lamentations and woes. Such men were in a way of hope, if they had but so much apprehension of their estates, as to ask themselves, What have I done? If this beetrue that there are such fearefull things prepared for finners, why am I not cast downe? Why am I no more troubled and discouraged for my wicked courses? Despaire to such is the beginning of comfort; and trouble the beginning of peace. A storme is the way to a calme, and hell the

Jude 23.

100 Cap. 8. T. Right grief, how raifed. Levit.16. 29.

The Soules Conflict.

the way to heaven.

But for raising of a right grief in the soule of a holy man, looke what is the state of the soule in it selfe, in what termes it is with God: whether there be any sinne hanging on the syle unrepented of. If all bee not well within us, then heres place for inward trouble, whereby the soule may afflict it selfe.

God saw this griefe so needfull for his people, that he appointed certaine dayes for afflicting them; because it is fit that sinne contracted by joy should bee dissolved by griefe; and sinne is so deepely invested into the soule, that a separation betwixt the soule and it cannot be wrought without much griefe; when the soule hath smarted for sinne, it sets then the right price upon reconciliation with God in Christ, and it feeleth what a bitter thing sinne is, and therefore it will bee afraid to bee too bold with it afterward; it likewise aweth the heart so, that it will not bee so loose towards G o D as it was before; and certainely that soule that hath felt the sweetnesse of keeping peace with God,

God, cannot but take deeply to heart, that there should bee any thing in us that should divide betwixt us and the fountaine of our comfort, that should stop the passage of our prayers, and the current of Gods favours both towards our selves and others; it is such an ill as is the cause of all other ill, and damps all our comforts.

2. Wee should looke out of our selves also, considering whether for troubles at home and abroad God calls not to mourning or troubling of our selves; griefe of compassion is as well required as griefe of contrition.

It is a dead member that is not sensible of the state of the body. Ieremie for feare he should not weepe enough for the distressed estate of the Church, desired of God, that his eyes might be made a fount aine of teares. A Christian, as hee must not bee proud sess, so neither must he be dead sless, so neither must he be dead sless; none more truely sensible either of sinne or of misery (so farre as misery carries with it any signe of Gods displeasure) then a true Christian; which issues from the

Cap. 8.

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life of Grace, which (where it is in any measure) is lively, and therefore senfible: for God gives morion and senses for the preservation of life. As Gods bowels are tender towards us, fo Gods people have tender bowells towards him, his cause, his people, and his Church. The fruit of this sensiblenesse, is earnest prayer to God. (as Melanchton faid well) If I cared for nothing, I would pray for nothing.

St milema. rem, nil orarem.

2. Griefe to be bounded.

T. When our affections are pliable

2. Griefe being thus raised, must, as wee said before, bee bounded and

guided.

1. God hath framed the foule and planted such affections in it, as may answere all his dealing towards his children; that when he enlargeth himselfe towards them, then the foule should enlarge it selfe to him againe; when he opens his hand wee ought to open our hearts; when hee shewes any token of displeasure we should grieve; when he troubles us, wee should trouble and grieve our selves. As God any way discovereth himself, so the soule should be in a setable pliablenesse. Then the foule

foule is as it should be when it is ready to meet God at every turne, to joy when he calls for it, to mourne when hee calls for that, to labour to know Gods meaning in every thing.

Againe GOD hath made the soule for a communion with himselfe, which communion is especially placed in the affections, which are the springs of all spirituall worship. Then the affections are well ordered, when wee are fit to have communion with God, to love, 107, trust, to delight in him above all things. The affections are the inward movings of the foule, which then move best when they move us to God, not from him. They are the feet of the foule, whereby wee walke with, and before God. When wee have our affections at such command, that wee can take them off from any thing in the world at fuch times as wee are to have more neare communion with God in hearing or prayer, & c. As Abraha whe he was to facrifice, left what soever might hinder him at the bottome of the Mount. When we let our affections so farre inCap. 8.

Whe fit to have communion with God.

Gen. 22.5.

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Cap. 8.

to the things of the world, as we cannot take them off when wee are to deale with God; it is a figne of spirituall intemperancie. It is said of the Israelites that they brought Ægypt with them into the wildernesse; so many bring the world in their hearts with them, when they come before God.

When our affections are fubor. dinate.

Bur because our affections are never well ordered without judgement, as being to follow, not to lead; It is an evidence that the foule is in a fit temper, when there is such a harmony in it, as that wee judge of things as they are, and affect as we judge, and execute as wee affect. This harmony within breeds uniformity and constancie in our resolutions, so that there is (as it were) an even thred drawne through the whole course and tenour of our lives, when wee are not off and on, up and downe. It argues an ill state of body, when it is very hot, or very cold, or hot in one part, and cold in another; so unevennesse of spirit argues a distemper; a wise mans life is of one colour like it selfe. The soule bred from heaven,

heaven, so farre as it is heavenly mind- Cap. 8. ed, desires to be (like heaven) above all stormes uniforme, constant; not as things under the Sunne, which are alwayes in changes, constant onely in inconstancie. Affections are as it were the winde of the soule, and then the soule is carried as it should be, when it is neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet toffed with tempests to move disorderly. When it is so well balaced that it is neither lift up, nor cast downe too much, but keepeth a steddy course. Our affections must not rise to become unruly passions, for then as a river that overfloweth the bankes, they carry much slime and soile with them. Though affections be the winde of the foule, yet unruly passions are the stormes of the soule, and will overturne all, if they be not suppressed. The best (as wee see in David here) if they doe not steare their hearts aright, are in danger of fudden gufts. A Christian must neither be a dead sea, nora raging sea.

Our affections are then in best tem-

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Cap. 8. When our affections become graces.

When fit to perform duties.

In case of Gods dis. honour, exceeding affection is no excesse.

per, when they become so many graces of the Spirit; as when love is turned to a love of God; joy, to a delight in the best things; feare, to a feare of offending him more then any creature; forrow, to a sorrow for sinne, &c.

They are likewise in good temper, when they move us to all duties of love and mercy towards others; when they are not shut, where they should be open, nor open where they should be shut.

Yet there is one case wherein exceeding affection is not over exceeding; As in an extalie of zeale upon a sudden apprehension of Gods dishonour, and his cause trodden under foot. It is better in this case, rather scarce to be our owne men then to be calme or quiet. It is said of Christ and David, that their hearts were eaten up with a holy zeale for Gods house. In such a case Moses unparalleld for meekenesse, was turned into an holy rage. The greatnesse of the provocation, the excellencie of the object, and the weight of the occasion, beares out the foule, not onely without blame.

blame, but with great praise, in such seeming distempers. It is the glory of a Christian to be carried with sull saile, and as it were with a spring tide of affection. So long as the streame of affection runneth in the due channell, and if there bee great occasions for great motions, then it is sit the affections should rise higher, as to burne with zeale, to be sicke of love, to be more vile for the Lord, as David; to be counted out of our wits with Saint Paul to surther the cause of Christ and the good of soules.

Thus we may see, the life of a poore Christian in this world, I he is in great danger if hee be not troubled at all. 2. when he is troubled, he is in danger to be over troubled. 3. when he hath brought his soule in tune againe, hee is subject to new troubles. Betwixt this ebbing and flowing there is very little quiet. Now because this cannot bee done without a great measure of Gods Spirit, our helpe is to make use of that promise of giving the holy Ghost to them that aske it. To teach us when, how long,

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The life of a Christian is a life of trouble.

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long, and how much to grieve: and when, and how long, and how much to rejoyce; the Spirit must teach the heart this, who as he moved upon the waters before the Creation, so hee must move upon the waters of our foules, for wee have not the command of our owne hearts. Every naturall man is carried away with his flesh and humours, upon which the devill rides, and carries him whither he list; he hath no better counfellors then flesh and blood, and Sathan counselling with them. But a godly man is not a flave to his carnall affections, but (as David here) labours to bring into captivity the first motions of sinne in his heart.

CAP. IX.

Of the soules disquiets, Gods dealings, and power to containe our selves in order.

Obser.1. MOreover we see, that the soule hath disquiets proper to it selfe, besides those griefes of Sympathy that arise from the bodie; for here the soule complaines of the

the soule it selfe, as when it is out of Cap. 9. the body it hath torments and joyes of its owne. And if these troubles of the foulebe not well cured, then by way of fellowship and redundance they will affect the outward man, and so the whole man shall bee inwrapt in miferie.

Obser.2.

From whence we further see, that God, when he will humble a man, needs not fetch forces from without, if hee let but our owne hearts loose, wee shall have trouble and worke enough, though we were as holy as David, God did not onely exercise him with a rebellious sonne out of his owne loynes, but with rebellious risings out of his own heart. If there were no enemie in the world, nor devill in hell, we carry that within us, that if it be let loofe will trouble us more then all the world besides. Oh that the proud creature should exalt himselfe against God, and runne into a voluntary course of provoking him, who cannot onely raise the humours of our bodies against us, but the passions of our mindes also to torment us!

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Therefore it is the best wisedome not to provoke the great God, for are wee stronger then he, that can raise our selves against our selves? and worke wonders not onely in the great world, but also in the little world, our soules and bodies when he pleases?

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We see likewise hence a necessity of having something in the soule above it selfe, it must be partaker of a diviner nature then it selfe; otherwise, when the most refined part of our soules, the very spirit of our mindes is out of frame, what shall bring it in againe? Therefore we must conceive in a godly man, a double selfe, one which must be denied, the other which must denie; one that breeds all the disquiet, and another that stilleth what the other hath raised. The way to still the soule, as it is under our corrupt selfe, is not to parlee with it, and divide government for peace sake, as if wee should gratifie the flesh in something, to redeeme liberty to the spirit in other things; for we shall finde the flesh will be too encroching. Wee must strive against it,

not with subtilty and discourse, so Cap. 9. much, as with peremptory violence silence it and vexe it: An enemy that parlees will yeeld at length. Grace is nothing else but that bleffed power, whereby as spirituall, wee gaine upon our felves as carnall. Holy love is that which wee gaine of felfe-love; and fo joy, and delight, &c. Grace labours to winne ground of the old man, untill at length it be all in all; Indeed wee are never our selves perfectly, till we have wholly pur off our felves. Nothing should bee at a greater distance to us then our selves. This is the reason why carnall men that have nothing above themselves but their corrupt selfe, sinke in great troubles, having nothing within to uphold them, whereas a good man is wiser then himselfe, holier then himselfe, stronger then himselfe, there is something in him more then a man. There be evills that the spirit of man alone out of the goodnesse of nature cannot beare, but the spirit of man alfisted with an higher spirit, will support and carry him through. It is a good I 3 tryall

Cap. 9.

trial of a mans condition to know what he esteemes to be himselfe. A godly man counts the inner man, the fanctified part, to be himselfe, whereby hee stands in relation to Christ and a better life. Another man esteemes his contentment in the world, the satisfaction of his carnall defires, the respect hee findes from men by reason of his parts, or fomething without him, that he is master of, this he counts himselfe, and by this hee values himselfe, and to this he makes his best thoughts and endevours serviceable; And of crosses in these things he is most sensible, and so sensible, that he thinks himself undone if hee feeth not a present issue out of them.

That which most troubles a good man in all troubles, is himselfe, so farre as he is unsubdued; he is more disquieted with himselfe, than with all troubles out of himselfe; when hee hath gotten the better once of himselfe, whatsoever falls from without, is light; where the spirit is enlarged, it cares not much for outward bondage; where the

the spirit is lightsome, it cares not much for outward darkenesse; where the spirit is setled, it cares not much for outward changes; where the spirit is one with it selfe, it can beare outward breaches; where the spirit is found, it can beare outward sicknesse. Nothing can beevery ill with us, when all is well within. This is the comfort of a holy man, that though hee bee troubled with himselfe, yet by reason of the spirit in him which is his better selfe, hee workes out by degrees, what ever is contrary. As Spring-water being cleere of it selfe, workes it selfe cleane, though it be troubled by something cast in; as the Sea will endure no poysonfull thing, but casts it upon the shore. But a carnall man is like a Spring corrupted, that cannot worke it felfe cleare, because it is wholly tainted; his eye and light is darknesse, and therefore no wonder if hee feeth nothing. Sinne lieth upon his understanding, and hinders the knowledge of it selfe; it lies close upon the will, and hinders the striving against it selfe.

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True

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True selfe that is worth the owning. is when a man is taken into a higher condition and made one with Christ. and esteemes neither of himselfe nor others, as happy for any thing according to the flesh. 1. Hee is under the law and government of the Spirit, and fo farre as he is himselfe, works according to that principle: 2. He labours more and more to be transformed into the likenesse of Christ, in whom hee esteemeth that hee hath his best being. 3. He esteemes of all things that befall him, to bee good or ill, as they further or hinder his best condition. If all bee well for that, hee counts himselfe well. what foever elfe befals him.

Another man when hee doth any thing that is good, acts not his owne part; but a godly man when hee doth good, is in his proper element; what another man doth for by ends and reasons, that hee doth from a new nature; which if there were no Law to compell, yet would moove him to that which is pleasing to Christ. If hee bee drawen aside by passion or temptati-

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Cap. o.

on, that hee judgeth not to bee himselfe, but taketh a holy revenge on
himselfe for it, as being redeemed and
taken out from himselfe; hee thinkes
himselfe no debtor, nor to owe any service to his corrupt selfe. That which
he plots and projects and works for is,
that Christ may rule every where, and
especially in himselfe, for he is not his
owne but Christs, and therefore desires
to bee more and more emptied of himselfe, that Christ might bee all in all in
him.

Thus we see, what great use there is of dealing withour selves, for the better composing and setling of our souls. Which though it bee a course without glory and oftentation in the world, as causing a man to retire inwardly into his owne breast, having no other witnesse but God and himself; and though it bee likewise irksome to the slesh, as calling the soule home to it selfe, being desirous naturally to wander abroad, and be a stranger at home: Yet it is a course both good in it selfe, and makes the soule good.

For

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For by this meanes the judgement is exercised and rectified, the will and affediens ordered, the whole man put into an holy frame fit for every good action. By this the tree is made good, and the fruit cannot but be answerable; by this the soule it selfe is set in tune, whence there is a pleasant harmony in our whole conversation. Without this, wee may doe that which is outwardly good to others, but wee can never bee good our selves. The first justice begins within, when there is a due subection of all the powers of the soule to the spirit, as sanctified and guided by Gods Spirit; when justice and order is first established in the soule, it will appeare from thence in all our dealings. Hee that is at peace in himselfe, will bee peaceable to others, peaceable in his family, peaceable in the Church, peaceable in the State; The foule of a wicked man is in perpetuall fedition; being alwayes troubled in it selfe, it is no wonder if it be troublesome to others. Unity in our selves is before union with others.

Vnitas ante unionem.

To conclude this first part, concerning intercourse with our selves. As wee desire to enjoy our selves, and to live the life of men, and of Christians, which is, to understand our wayes: as we defire to live comfortably, and not to be accessary of yeelding to that forrow which causeth death: As wee defire to answere GoD and our selves, when we are to give an account of the inward tumults of our foules: As we defire to be veffells prepared for every good worke, and to have strength to undergoe any crosse: As we desire to have healthy soules, and to keep a Sabbath within our selves: As wee desire not onely to doe good, but to be good

in our selves: So let us labour to quiet our soules, and often ask a reason of our selves, Why we should not be quiet? Cap. 9.

CAP.

CAP. X.

Meanes not to bee oversharged with forrow.

To helpe us further herein, besides that which hath beene formerly spoken.

Changes must be forethought of

1. Wee must take heed of building an ungrounded confidence of happinesse for time to come : which makes us when changes come, 1. Unacquainted with them; 2. takes away expectation of them; 3. and preparation for them. When any thing is strange and sudden, and lights upon us unfurnished and unfenced, it must needs put our spirits out of frame. It is good therefore to make all kinde of troubles familiar to us, in our thoughts at least, and this will breake the force of them. It is good to fence our foules beforehand against all affaults, as men use to keepe out the Sea, by raising bankes; and if a breach bee made, to repaire it presently.

We had need to maintaine a strong Cap. 10. Garrison of holy Reasons against the affaults of strong passions; wee may hope for the best, but feare the work, and prepare to beare what soever. We fay that a fet diet is dangerous, because variety of occasions will force us upon breaking of it: So in this world of changes, wee cannot resolve upon any certaine condition of life, for upon alteration the minde is out of frame. We cannot say this or that trouble shall not befall, yet we may by helpe of the Spirit, fay, nothing that doth befall, shall make mee doe that which is unworthy of a Christian:

That which others make easie by suffering, that a wise man maketh easie by thinking of beforehand. If we expect the worst: when it comes, it is no more than wee thought of. If better befals us, than it is the sweeter to us, the lesse wee expected it. Our Saviour foretels the worst: In the world you shall have tribulation, therefore looke for it, but then hee will not leave us. Satan deludes with faire promises: but

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Ioh. 1633.

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Heb. 4.9.

Rcv.14.13.

Caution.

Cap. 10. when the contrary falls out, hee leaves his followers in their distresses. Wee desire peace and rest, but wee seeke it not in its owne place; there is a rest for Gods people, but that is not here, nor yet; but it remaines for them; they reft from their labours, but that is after they are dead in the Lord. There is no found rest till then. Yet this caution must be remembred, that wee shape not in our fancies such troubles as are never likely to fall out, It comes either from weaknesse or guiltinesse, to feare shaddowes. We shall not need to make crosses, they will (as we say of foule weather) come before they be fent for. How many evills doe people feare, from which they have no further hurt, then what is bred onely by their causelesse feares. Nor yet if they be probable, must wee thinke of them so, as to be altogether so affected, as if undoubtedly they would come, for so wee give certaine strength to an uncertaine crosse, and usurpe upon God, by anticipating that which may never come to passe. It

was rashuesse in David to say, I shall

one

one day perish by the hand of Saul.

If they be such troubles, as will certainely come to passe, as parting with friends and contentments (at least) by death; than I thinke of them fc, as not to be much dismayed, but furnish thy heart with strength before-hand that they may fall the lighter. 2. Thinke of them so, as not to give up the bucklers to pattion, and lye open as a faire marke for any uncomfortable accident to strike to the heart; nor yet so think of them as to despise them, but to consider of Gods meaning in them, and how to take good by them. 3. Thinke of the things we enjoy, so as to moderate our enjoying of them, by confidering there must be a parting, and therefore how wee shall bee able to beare it when it comes.

2. If we desire not to be overcharged with sorrow, when that which we feare is fallen upon us, we must then beforehand looke that our love to any thing in this world, shoot not so farre, as that, when the time of severing commeth, we part with so much of our hearts by

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2.

that rent. Those that love too much. will alwayes grieve too much. It is the greatnesse of our affections which canfeth the sharpnesse of our afflictions. He that cannot abound without pride and high-mindednesse, will not want without too-much dejectednesse. Love is planted for such things as can returne love: and make us better by loving them, wherein we shall satisfie our love to the full. It is pitty so sweet an affection should be lost: So sorrow is for finne, and for other things as they make finne the more bitter to us. The life of a Christian should be a meditation how to unloose his affections from inferiour things; hee will easily die that is dead before in affection. But this will never be unlesse the soule seeth something better than al things in the world, upon which is may bestow it selfe. In that measure our affections die in their excessive motion to things below, as they are taken up with the love and admiration of the best things. He that is much in heaven in his thoughts, is free from being toffed with tempest here below:

below; the top of those mountaines | Cap. 10. that are above the middle Region, are so quier, as that the lightest things (as ashes) lie still and are not moved. The way to mortific earthly members that bestirre themselves in us, is to mind things above. The more the wayes of wifedome lead us on high, the more wee avoyd the snares below.

In the uncertainty of all events here. labour to frame that contentment in and from our owne selves, which the things themselves wil not yeeld; frame peace by freeing our hearts from too much feare, and riches by freeing our hearts from covetous desires. Frame a sufficiencie out of contentednesse; If the foule it self be out of tune, outward things will doe no more good than a faire shooe to a gouty foote.

And feeke not our felves abroad out of our selves in the conceits of other men. A man shall never live quietly, that hath not learned to be fet light by of others. He that is little in his owne eyes, will not be troubled to be little in the eyes of others. Men that fet too

Col.3.1. & 5.

high K

high a price upon themselves, when others will not come to their price, are discontent. Those whose condition is above their worth, & their pride above their condition, shall never want forrow; yet wee must maintaine our authority and the Image of God in our places, for that is Gods and not ours, and we ought fo to carrie our selves as we approve our felves to their consciences, though we have not their good words; Let none despise thy youth, saith Saint Paul to Timothy, that is, Walke fo before them as they shall have no cause. It is not in our owne power what other men thinke or speake, but it is in our power (by Gods grace) to live fo, that none can thinke ill of us, but by flandering, and none beleeve ill but by too much credulity.

3. When any thing seiseth upon us, wee must take heed we mingle not our owne passions with it; wee must neither bring sinne to, nor mingle sinne with the suffering: for that wil trouble the spirit, more than the trouble it self. We are more to deale with our owne

hearts, |

3

hearts, than with the trouble it selfe. We are not hurt till our soules be hurt. God will not have it in the power of any creature to hurt our soules, but by our owne treason against our selves.

Therfore we should have our hearts in continuall jealousie, for they are ready to deceive the best. In suddaine encounters, some sinne doth many times discoveritselfe, the seed whereoflyeth hid in our natures, which wee thinke our selves very free from. Who would have thought the feeds of murmuring had lurked in the meake nature of Moses? That the seeds of muriher had lurked in the pittifull heart of David? That the seeds of deniall of Christ had Iyen hid in the zealous affection of Peter towards Christ? If passions breake out from us, which we are not naturally enclined unto, and over which by grace wee have got a great conquest; how watchfull need wee be over our selves in those things, which by temper, enstome, and company, wee are carried tinto? and what cause have wee to feare continually that wee are worse K 2 than

Cap. 10.

2 Sam. 12.9

Mat, 26.72.

than we take our selves to be?

There are many unruly passions lye hid in us, untill they be drawne out by something that meeteth with them; either 1 by way of opposition, as when the truth of God spiritually unfolded, meets with some beloved corruption, it swelleth bigger; the force of Gunpowder is not knowne untill some sparke light on it; and oftentimes the stillest natures (if crossed) discover the deepest corruptions. Sometimes it is drawne out by dealing with the opposite spirits of other men. Oftentimes retyred men know not what lies hid in themselves.

2. Sometimes by crosses, as many people whilest the freshnesse and vigour of their spirits lasteth, and while the flower of age, and a sull supply of all things continueth, seeme to be of a pleasing and calme disposition; but afterwards when changes come, like swife, they are discovered. Then, that which in nature is unsubdued, openly appeares.

3. Temptations likewise have a

fearch-

fearching power to bring that to light in us which was hidden before. Sathan hath beene a winnower, and a fifter, of old: hee thought if *Iob* had beene but touched in his body, hee would have curfed God to his face.

Some men out of policie conceale their passion, untill they see some advantage to let it out; as Esau smoothered his hatred untill his fathers death. When the restraint is taken away, Men (as wee say) shew themselves in their pure naturalls; unloose a Tyger or a Lyon, and you know what he is.

4. Further, let us see more every day into the state of our owne soules; what a shame is it that so nimble and swift a spirit as the soule is, that can mount up to heaven, & from thence come downe into the earth in an instant, should whilest it lookes over all other things over-looke it selfe? that it should bee skilfull in the story (almost) of all times and places, and yet ignorant of the story of it selfe? that we should know what is done in the Court and Countrey, and beyond the Seas, and be ignorant K 2

Cap. 10.

Luke 22.3.

lob I.

Aperta perdunt odia vindicta locum.

Solve Lecners & fenties.

4.

of what is done at home in our owne hearts? that we should live knowne to others, and yet die unknowne to our selves? that we should be able to give account of any thing better then of our felves to our felves? This is the cause why we stand in our owne light; why wee thinke better of our felves than, others, and better then is cause. This is that which hindreth all reformation, for how can wee reforme that which wee are not willing to fee, and fo wee lose one of the surest evidences of our fincerity, which is, a willingnesse to fearch into our hearts, and to bee fearched by others. A fincere heart will offer it selfe to triall.

And therefore let us fift our actions, and our passions, and see what is flesh in them, and what is spirit, and so separate the precious from the vile. It is good likewise to consider what sinne we were guilty of before, which moved God to give us up to excesse in any passion, and wherein we have grieved his Spirit; Passion will bee more moderate, when thus it knowes, it must

come

come to the triall and censure. This course will either make us weary of passion, or else passion will make us weary of this strict course. Wee shall sind it the safest way to give our hearts no rest, till we have wrought on them to purpose, and gotten the mastery over them.

When the soule is invred to this dealing with it selfe, it will learne the skill to command, and passions will be soone commanded, as being invred to be examined and checked; As wee see doggs, and such like domesticall creatures, that will not regard a stranger, yet will be quieted in brawles presently, by the voice of their Master, to which they are accustomed. This sits us for service. Unbroken spirits are like unbroken horses, unsit for any use, until they be thorowly subdued.

(as much as in us lieth) the very first risings, before the soule bee overcast; Passions are but little motions at the first, but grow as Rivers doe, greater and greater, the further they are cark

We must crush the first motions of sin.

ried from their Spring. The first rifings are the more to bee looked unto, because there is most danger in them, and we have least care over them. Sin. like ruft, or a Canker, will by little and little eate out all the graces of the foule. There is no staying when we are once downe the hill till we come to the bottome. No sin but is easier kept out, then driven out. If wee cannot prevent wicked thoughts, yet wee may deny them lodging in our hearts. It is our giving willing entertainment to finfull motions, that increaseth guilt, and hindereth our peace. It is that which moveth God to give us up to a further degree of evill affections. Therefore what we are afraid to doe before men, we should bee afraid to thinke before God. It would much further our peace to keep our judgements cleare, as being the eye of the soule, whereby we may discerne in every action and passion, what is good, and what is evill: as likewise to preserve tendernesse of heart, that may checke us at the first, and not brooke the least evill being discovered. When

the heart begins once to be kindled, it | Cap. 10. is easie to smother the smoke of passion, which otherwise will fume up into the head, and gather into so thicke a . cloud, as wee shall lose the fight of our selves, and what is best to bee done. And therefore David here labours to take up his heart at the first; his care was to crush the very first insurrections of his soule, before they came to break forth into open rebellion; stormes we know rise out of little gusts. Little rifings neglectd, cover the soule before wee are aware. If wee would checke these risings and stifle them in their birth, they would not breake out afterwards to the reproach of Religion, to the scandall of the weake, to the offence of the strong, to the griefe of Gods Spirit in us, to the disturbance of our owne spirits in doing good, and to the disheartning of us in troubling of our inward peace, and thereby weakning our assurance. Therefore let us stop beginnings as much as may be; and fo soone as they begin to rise, let us begin to examine what raised them, and whither

Comething to comfort us. As there is a vanity lies hid in the best worldly good: So there is a bleffing lies hid in the worst worldly evill. GoD usually maketh up that with some advantage in another kinde, wherein wee are inferiour to others. Others are in greater place. So they are in greater danger. Others bee richer, so their cares and fnares be greater; the poore in the world may bee richer in faith than they. The soule can better digest and master a low estate than a prosperous, and is under some abasement it is in a lesse distance from God. Others are not so afflicted as we, than they have leffe experience of Gods gracious power than wee. Others may have more healthy bodies, but soules lesse weaned from the world. We would not change conditions with them, so as to have their spirits with their condition? For one halfe of our lives, the meanest are as happy and free from cares, as the greatest Monarch: that is, whilest both sleepe; and usually the sleepe of the one, is sweeter than the sleepe of the other.

Cap. 10.

Iam. 2.5.

Cap. 10. other. What is all that the earth can afford us, if God deny health? and this a man in the meanest condition may enjoy. That wherein one man differs from another, is but title, and but for a

little time; Death levelleth all.

There is scarce any man, but the good hee receives from God is more than the ill hee feeles, if our unthankfull hearts would fuffer us to thinke fo. Is not our health more than our fickenesse? doe we not enjoy more than we want, I meane, of the things that are necessary? Are not our good dayes more than our evill?-but we would go to heaven upon Roses, and usually one crosse is more taken to heart, than an hundred bleffings. So unkindly wee deale with God. Is God indebted to us, doth hee owe us any thing? those that deserve nothing, should be content with any thing.

Wee should looke to others as good as our felves (as well as to our felves) and than we shall see it is not our owne case onely; who are we that we should looke for an exempted condition from

those

those troubles which Gods dearest children are addicted unto.

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Thus when we are surprised contrary to our looking for and liking, wee should study rather how to exercise some grace, than give way to any pasfion. Thinke, now is a time to exercise our patience, our wisedome, and other graces. By this meanes wee shall turne that to our greatest advantage, which Satan intendeth greatest hurt to us by. Thus we shall not onely master every condition, but make it serviceable to our good. If nature teach Bees, not onely to gather hony out of sweet flowers, but out of bitter: Shall not grace teach us to draw even out of the bitterest condition, something to better our soules? We learne to tame all creatures, even the wildest, that wee may bring them to our use; and why should wee give way to our owne unruly passions?

7. It were good to have in our eye, the beauty of a well ordered soule, and wee should thinke that nothing in this world is of sufficient worth to put us

1

out

out of frame. The fanctified soule should be like the Sunne in this, which though it worketh upon all these inferiour bodies, and cherisheth them by light and influence; yet is not moved nor wrought upon by them againe, but keepeth its owne lustre and distance: So our spirits being of a heavenly breed, should rule other things beneath them, and not be ruled by them. It is a holy state of soule to bee under the power of nothing beneath it selfe; Are we stirred? than consider, Is this matter worth the losse of my quiet? What wee esteeme, that wee love, what wee love, we labour for; And therefore let us esteem highly of a cleare calme temper, whereby we both enjoy our God, and our selves, and know how to ranke all things else. It is against nature for inferiour things to rule that, which the wise Disposer of all things hath set above them. Wee owe the flesh neither suit nor service, wee are no debtors toit.

The more wee set before the soule that quiet estate in heaven, which the

foules

foules of perfect men now enjoy, and it felfe ere long shall enjoy there, The more it will be in love with it, and endevour to attaine unto it. And because the foule never worketh better, than when it is raised up by some strong and sweet affection; let us looke upon our nature, as it is in Christ, in whom it is pure, sweet, calme, meeke, every way lovely. This fight is a changing fight, love is an affection of imitation, we affect a likenesse to him we love. Let us learne of Christ to be humble and meeke, and then wee shall finde rest to our soules. The fetting of an excellent idea and platforme before us, will raise and draw up our foules higher, and make us fenfible of the least movings of spirit, that shall be contrary to that, the attainement whereof wee have in our defires. He will hardly attaine to meane things, that fets not before him higher perfection. Naturally we love to see symetry and proportion, even in a dead picture, and are much taken with some curious peece. But why should wee not rather labour to keepe the affections of the foule

Cap. 10.

Anima nunquam melius agit, qua ex imperio alicujus insignis affetius.

Math. 11.

soule in due proportion? Seeing a meek and well ordered foule is not onely lovely in the fight of men and Angels, but is much set by, by the great God himselfe. But now the greatest care of those that set highest price upon themselves is, how to compose their outward carriage in some gracefull manner, never studying how to compose their spirits; and rather how to cover the deformity of their passions then to cure them. Whence it is that the foulest inward vices are covered with the fairest vizards, and to make this the worse, all this is counted the best breeding.

The Hebrewes placed all their happinesse in peace, and when they would comprise much in one word, they would wish peace. This was that the Angels brought newes of from heaven, at the birth of Christ. Now peace riseth out of quietnesse and order, and God that is the God of peace, is the God of order first. What is health, but when all the members are in their due positure, and all the humors in a setled quiet?

Whence

r Cor.14.

Whence ariseth the beauty of the world, but from that comely order wherein every creature is placed; the more glorious and excellent creatures above, and the lesse below? So it is in the soule; the best constitution of it is when by the Spirit of God it is so ordered, as that all be in subjection to the Law of the minde. What a sight were it for the feet to be where the head is, and the earth to be where the heaven is, to see all turned upside downe? And to a spirituall eye it seemes as great a deformity, to see the soule to be under the rule of sinfull passions.

Comelinesse riseth out of the sit proportion of divers members to make up one body, when every member hath a beauty in it selfe, and is likewise well suited to other parts; A faire sace and a crooked body, comely upper parts, and the lower parts uncomely, suit not well; because comelinesse stands in onenesse, in a sit agreement of many parts to one; when there is the head of a man; and the body of a beast, it is a monster in nature; And is

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There must be an uniformity in the lives of Christians.

derstanding head, and a fierce untamed heart? It cannot but raise up a holy indignation in us against these risings, when wee consider how unbeseeming they are; What doe these base passions in a heart dedicated to God, and given up to the government of his Spirit? what an indignity is it for Princes to goe a foot, and servants on horse back? for those to rule, whose place is to be ruled? as being good attendants, but bad guides. It was Chams curse to be a servant of servants.

8. This must be strengthned with a strong selfe-denial, without which there can be no good done in Religion.

There be two things that most trouble us in the way to heaven; corruption within us, and the crosse without us; that which is within us must be denied, that that which is without us may be endured. Otherwise we cannot follow him by whom wee looke to be saved. The gate, the entrance of Religion, is narrow, we must strip our selves of our selves before we can enter; if we bring

Christians must deny themselves

8

any

any ruling lust to Religion, it wil prove | Cap. 10. a bitter root of some grosse sinne, or of apostacie and finall desperation.

Those that sought the praise of men,

more than the praise of God, could not beleeve, becanse that lust of ambition, would, when it should be crossed, draw them away. The young man thought it better for Christ to lose a Disciple, than that hee should lose his possession, and therefore went away as hee came: The third ground came to nothing, because the Plough had not gone deepe enough to breake up the rootes, whereby their hearts were fastned to earthly contentments. This selfe-deniall wee must carry with us through all the parts of Religion, both in our active and passive obedience; for in obedience there must be a subjection to a superiour, but corrupt selfe, neither is subject, nor can be, it will have an oare in every thing, and makethevery thing, yea, Religion serviceable to it self. It is the Idol of the world, or rather the god that is

Ish. 12.43

Mat. 19.22

Mat.13 22.

Rom. 8.

L 2

fet highest of all in the soule; & so God himselfe is made but an Idol. It is hard

to

his fault to stand more upon his ownereputation, than the glory of Gods mercy. It is a prevailing signe, when though there be no outward encou-

rage-

The Soules Conflict.	The	Soules	Conflict	ŧ.
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ragements, Nay, though there be difcouragements, yet wee can rest in the comfort of a good intention. For usually inward comfort is a note of inward fincerity. Iehu must be seene, or else all is loft.

Cap. 11.

2. It is a good evidence of some prevailing, when upon Religious grounds wee can crosse our selves in those things unto which our hearts stand most affected, this sheweth wee reserve GOD his owne place in our

2 Kings ro. 16.

hearts. 2. When being privie to our owne inclination and temper, wee have gotten such a supply of spirit, as that the grace which is contrary to our temper appeares in us. As oft wee see, none more patient, than those that are naturally enclined to intemperancie of pafsion, because naturall pronenesse maketh them jealous over themselves.

grace is helped by nature, there a little

Some, out of feare of being over-much moved, are not moved so much as they should be: This jealousie stirreth us up to a carefull use of all helps; Where

grace

clination is, and where it faileth. That which we favour, we are tender of, it must not be touched. A good heart, when any corruption is discovered by

a fearching

2. Sam.

144

Cap. 11.

12.4.

5.

a fearthing Ministry, is affected as if it had found out a deadly enemy. Touchinesse and passion argues guilt.

6. This is a figne of a mans victory over himselfe, when hee loves health and peace of body and minde, with a supply of all needfull things, chiefly for this end, that hee may with more freedome of spirit serve God in doing good to others. So foone as grace entreth into the heart, it frameth the heart to be in some measure publique: and thinks it hath not its end, in the bare enjoying of any thing, untill it can improve what it hath for a further end. Thus to seeke our selves, is to deny our selves, and thus to deny our selves, is truely to seeke our selves. It is no selfe-seeking, when wee care for no more then that, without which we cannot comfortably serve God. When the soule can say unto GoD, Lord as thou wouldest have mee serve thee in my place; so grant me such a measure of health and strength, wherein I may ferve thee.

But what if God thinks it good, that Object. I shall

Cap. 11.

6.

Cap. 11.

I shall serve him in weaknesse, and in want, and suffering.

Anfw.

Then, it is a comfortable figne of gaining over our owne wills, when we can yeeld our selves to bee disposed of by God, as knowing best what is good for us. There is no condition but therein we may exercise some grace, and ho nour G o p in some measure. Yet because some enlargement of condition is ordinarily that estate wherein wee are best able to doe good in; wee may in the use of meanes desire it, and upon that, refigne up our selves wholly unto GoD, and make his will our will, without exception or refervation, and care for nothing more than wee can have with his leave and love. This 10b had exercised his heart unto; whereupon in that great change of condition, hee sinned not, that is, fell not into the finnes incident to that dejected and miserable state; into sinnes of rebellion and discontent. He caried his crosfes comely, with that stayednesse and resignednesse, which became a holy man.

Job 2.

7. It is further a cleare evidence of Cap. 11. a spirit subdued, when wee will discover the truth of our affection towards God and his people, though with cenfure of others. David was content to endure the censure of neglecting the state and Majesty of a King, out of joy for setling the Arke. Nehemiah could Neh.2.3. not dissemble his griefe for the ruines of the Church, though in the Kings presence: It is a comfortable signe of the wasting of selfe-love, when wee can be at a point what becomes of our selves, so it goe well with the cause of God and the Church.

Now the way to prevaile still more over our selves, (as when we are to do or suffer any thing, or withstand any person in a good cause, &c.) is, not to thinke that we are to deale with men, yea, or with Devils so much as with our selves. The Saints resisted their enemies to death, by refisting their owne corruptions first: if we once get the victory over our felves, all other things are conquered to our ease. All the hurt Satan and the world doe us, is,

How to get the mastery of our felves.

by

Cap. 11.
Te vince &
mundus ti.
bivittus
est,&c.

by correspondency with our selves. All things are so farre under us, as wee are above our selves.

For the further subduing of our selves, it is good to sollow sinne to the sirst Hold and Castle, which is corrupt nature; The streames will leade us to the Spring head: Indeed the most apparant discovery of sinne is in the outward carriage; wee see it in the fruit before in the root; as wee see grace in the expression before in the affection: But yet wee shall never hate sinne thorowly, until we consider it in the poysoned root from whence it ariseth.

That which least troubles a naturall man, doth most of all trouble a true Christian; A naturall man is sometimes troubled with the fruit of his corruption, and the consequents of guilt and punishment that attend it; but a true hearted Christian, with corruption it selfe; this drives him to complaine with St. Paul, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me, not from the members onely, but from this body of death? Which is as noysome

Rom.7.

Cap. 11.

to my soule, as a dead carrion is to my senses; which together with the members, is marvellously nimble and active; and hath no dayes, or houres, or minuits of rest; alwayes laying about it to enlarge it selfe, and like spring-water, which the more it issueth our, the more it may.

It is a good way, upon any particular breach of our inward peace, prefently to have recourse to that which breeds and foments all our disquiet. Lord, what doe I complaine of this my unruly passion? I carry a nature about me subject to breake our continually upon any occasion; Lord, strike at the root, and dry up the fountaine in mee. Thus David doth arise from the guilt of those two foule sinnes, of Muriber and Adultery; to the sinne of his nature, the root it selfe; As if hee should say, Lord, it is not these actuall sinnes that defile mee onely; but if I looke backe to my first conception, I was tainted in the fpring of my nature.

This is that here which put Davids soule so much out of frame; For from whence

Pial. ST.

Cap. 11.

whence was this contradiction? And whence was this contradiction fo unwearied, in making head againe and againe against the checks of the spirit, in him? Whence was it that Corruption would not be said Nay? Whence were these sudden and unlookt for objections of the flesh? But from the remainder of old Adam in him, which like a Michel within us is either scoffing at the wayes of God; or as lobs wife, fretting and thwarting the motions of Gods spirit in us; which prevailes the more, because it is homebred in us: whereas holy motions are strangers to most of our soules. Corruption is loth that a new commer in should take so much upon him as to controlle: As the Sodomites thought much that Lot being a franger should intermeddle amongst them. If God once leave us as heedid Hezekiah to trie what is in us, what should he find but darknesse, rebellion, unrulinesse, doubtings, &c. in the best of us? This flesh of ours hath principles against all Gods principles, and lawes against all Gods lawes, and reasons against

Gen.19.9.

gainst all GOD s reasons. Oh! if wee could but one whole houre feriously think of the impure iffue of our hearts, it would bring us downe upon our knees in humiliation before God. But wee can never whilest we live, so thorowly as we should, see into the depth of our deceitfull hearts, nor yet bee humbled enough for what we see; For though we speake of it and confesse it, yet we are not so sharpned against this corrupt flesh of ours, as wee should. How should it humble us, that the seeds of the vilest sinne, even of the Sinne against the hely Ghost is in us? and no thanke to us that they breake not out. It should humble us to heare of any great enormous sinne in another man, considering what our owne nature would proceed unto if it were not restrained. We may see our owne nature in them as face answering face; If God should take his Spirit from us, there is enough in us to defile a whole world; And although wee bee ingrasted into Christ, yet wee carry about us a relish of the old stocke still. David was a

Cap. 11.

man

I Sam. 24.6

Pfal.30.6.

Cap. 11. man of a good naturall constitution; and for grace, a man after Gods owne heart, and had got the better of himselfe in a great measure, and had learned to overcome himselfe in matter of revenge, as in Sauls case: yet now wee fee the vessellis shaken a little, and the dregs appeare that were in the bottome before. Alas, weeknownot our owne hearts, till we plow with Gods heifer, till his Spirit bringeth a light into our foules. It is good to confider how this impure fring breaks out diversy, in the divers conditions wee are in; there is no estate of life, nor no action wee undertake, wherein it will not put forth it selfe to defile us: It is so full of poyfon that it taints whatfoever wee doe, both our natures, conditions, and actions. In a prosperous condition (like David) we thinke we shall never be moved. Under the Crosse the soule is troubled and drawne to murmur, and to be fullen, and fink downe in discouragement, to be in a heat almost to blasphemy, to be weary of our callings, and to quarrell with every thing in our way. See the folly

folly and fury of most men in this, for us silly wormes to contradict the great God: And to whose perill is it? Is it not our own? Let us gather our selves, with all our wit and strength together, Alas, what can wee doe but provoke him, and get more stripes? Wee may be sure hee will deale with us, as wee deale with our children, if they be froward and unquiet for lesser matters, we will make them cry and be sullen for something: Refractory stubborne horses are the more spurred, and yet shake not off the rider.

CAP. XII.

Of originall righteousnesse, naturall corruption, Satans joyning with it, and our duty thereupon.

Ø. I.

By there marke a plot of spirituall treason; Sathan joyning with our corruption, setteth the wit on worke to perswade the soule, that this inward rebellion is not so bad, because it is naturall

Moft of the most dangerous opinions of Popery, as Justificarion by works, State ot perfection, merit, atisfaction, supereroga-1101, &c. spring fro hence that they have fleight coceits of cocupiscence as a condition of nature; Yet some of them as Michael Bayns profeflor at Lovane Se. are found in the point. An (w. Gen.I.

rising out of the first principles in our creation, and was curbed in by the bridle of original righteousnesse, which they would have accessary and supernaturall, and therefore alledge that concupiscence is lesse odious and more excusable in us, and so, no great danger in yeelding and betraying our Soules unto it, and by that meanes perswading us, that that which is our deadliest enemie, hath no harme in it, nor meaneth any to us.

This rebellion of lusts against the understanding, is not naturall, as our nature came out of Gods hands at the first: For this being evill and the cause of evill, could not come from God who is Good, and the cause of all good, and nothing but good: who upon the creation of all things pronounced them good, and after the creation of man pronounced of all things that they were very good. Now that which is ill and very ill, cannot be seated at the same time in that which is good and very good: God created man at the first, right,

right, he of himselfe sought out many in. ventions. As God beautified the heaven with starres, and decked the earth with variety of plants, and hearbs, and flowers. So hee adorned man his prime creature here below, with all those endowments that were fit for a happy condition, and originall righteousnesse was fit and due to an originall and happy condition. Therefore as the Angels were created with all Angelicall perfections, and as our bodies were created in an absolute temper of all the humours; so the soule was created in that sweet harmony wherein there was no discord, as an instrument in tune fit to be moved to any duty; as a cleane neat glasse the soule represented Gods image and holineffe.

d. 2.

Therefore it is so farre, that concupiscence should be natural, that the contrary to it, namely, Righteousnesse, wherein Adam was created, was naturall to him; though it were planted in mans nature by God, and so in re-

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gard of the cause of it, was supernaturall, yet because it was agreeable to that happy condition, without which he could not subsist, in that respect it was naturall, and should have beene derived (if hee had stood) together with his nature, to his posterity. As heat in the ayre, though it hath its first impression from the heate of the Sunne, yet is naturall, because it agreeth to the nature of that element: and though man be compounded of a spirituall and earthly substance, yet it is naturall that the baser earthly part should be subject to the Superiour, because where there is different degrees of worthinesse, it is fir there should be a subordination of the meaner to that which is in order higher. The body naturally desires food and bodily contentments, yet in a manindued with reason, this desire is governed so as it becomes not inordinate: A beast sinnes not in its appetite, because it hath no power above to order it. A man that lives in a folitary place farre remote from company, may take his liberty to live as it pleaseth him;

him; but if he comes to live under the government of some well ordered Citie; then hee is bound to submit to the lawes, and customes of that Cirie, under penalty, upon any breach of order: So the risings of the soule, howsoever in other creatures they are not blameable, having no commander in them selves above them, yet in man they are to bee ordered by reason and judgement.

Therefore it cannot be, that concupiscence should be naturall, in regard of the state of creation; It was Adams sin which had many finnes in the wombe of it, that brought this disorder upon the Soule; Adams person first corrupted our nature, and nature being corrupted, corrupts our persons, and our persons being corrupted, encrease the corruption of our nature, by custome of finning, which is another nature in us; as a streame the farther it runnes from the spring head, the more it enlargeth its channell, by the running of leffer rivers unto it, untill it empties it selfe into the Sea; So corruption, till it be over

Cap. 12.

overpowred by grace, swelleth bigger and bigger, so that though this disor-der was not naturall, in regard of the first creation, yet since the fall it is become naturall, even as wee call that which is common to the whole kinde. and propagated from parents to their children, to beenaturall; So that it is both naturall and against nature, naturall now, but against nature in its first perfection.

And because corruption is natural to us, therefore 1. we delight in it, whence it comes to passe, that our soules are carried along in an easie current, to the committing of any sinne without opposition. 2. Because it is natural, therefore it is unwearied and restlesse, as light bodies are not wearied in their motion upwards, nor heavie bodies in their motion downwards, nor a streame in its running to the Sea, because it is naturall: Hence it is that the old man is never tyred in the works of the flesh, nor never drawne dry. When men cannot act sinne, yet they will love sinne, and act it over againe by pleasing thoughts

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of it, and by finfull speculation suck | Cap. 12. out the delight of sinne; and are grieved, not for their sinne, but because they want strength and opportunity to commit it; If sinne would not leave them, they would never leave finne. This corruption of our nature is not wrought in us by reason and perswasions, for then it might be satisfied with reasons, but it is in us by way of a naturall inclination, as iron is caried to the Loadstone; And till our natures be altered, no reason will long prevaile, but our finful disposition as a streame stopt for a little while, will breake out with greater violence. 3. Being naturall it needs no help, as the earth needs no tillage to bring forth weeds. Whe our corrupt nature is carried contrary to that which is good, it is caried of it selfe. As when Sathan lyes or murthers, it comes from his owne cursed nature; and though Sathan joyneth with our corrupt nature, yet the pronenesse to sinne and the consent unto it, is of our selves.

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hating God, and working mischiefe as Cap. 12. hee,&c. Otherwise there is for kinde the same cursed disposition, and malice of nature against true goodnes in man, which is in the devils and damned spirits themselves.

It is no mitigation of sinne, to plead it is naturall, for naturall diseases (as leprosies) that are derived from Parents, are most dangerous, and least curable; Neither is this any excuse, for because as it is naturall, so it is voluntary, not onely in Adam, in whose loines wee were, and therefore sinned; but likewise in regard of our selves, who are so farre from stopping the course of sin either in our selves or others, that wee feed and strengthen it, or at least give more way to it, and provide lesse against it then wee should, untill wee come under the government of grace; and by that meanes, we justifie Adams finne, and that corrupt estate that followeth upon it, and shew, that if we had beene in Adams condition our selves, wee would have made that ill choice which hee made. And though this

Suspira' à ligatus, non ferro alique, sed mea ferreavolütate, velle meum tenel et inimicus & inde mihi catenam secrit, Aug. Confess.

Quicquid
fire impera.
vit animus,
obtinut.
Seneca.

this corruption of our nature be necef-Cary to us, yet it is no violent necessity from an outward cause, but a necessity that we willingly pull upon our selves, and therefore ought the more to humble us; for the more necessarily we fin, the more voluntarily, and the more voluntarily, the more necessarily; the will putting it selfe voluntarilie into these fetters of sinne. Necesity is no plea, when the will is the immediate cause of any action: Mens hearts tell them they might rule their defires if they would; For tell a man of any diff which hee liketh, that there is poyson in it, and he will not meddle with it; So tell him that death is in that sinne which hee is about to commit, and he will abstaine if hee beleeve it be so; if hee beleeve it not, it is his voluntary unbeleefe and atheisme.

If the will would use that soveraigntie it should, and could at the first, wee should bee altogether freed from this necessity. Men are not damned because they cannot do better, but because they will do no better; If there were no will there

there would be no hell; For men willingly submit to the rule and law of sin, they plead for it, and like it so well, as they hate nothing so much as that which any way withstandeth those lawlesse lawes.

Those that thinke it their happinesse to doe what they will, that they might bee free, crosse their owne desires, for this is the way to make them most perfect flaves. When our will is the next immediate cause of sinne, and our consciences beare witnesse to us that it is so; then conscience is ready to take Gods part in accusing our selves: Our consciences tell us to our faces, that we might doe more then wee doe to hinder sinne; and that when wee sinne, it is not through weaknesse, but out of the wickednesse of our nature:

Our Consciences tell us that wee sinne not onely willingly, but often with delight, (so farre forth as wee are not subdued by grace, or awed by something above us,) and that wee efteeme any restraint to bee our misery. And where by grace the will is strengthened.

Cap. 12. Cosset voluntas propria & non erit insernus

thened, so, that it yeelds not a full consent, yet a gracious soule is humbled even for the sudden risings of corruption that prevent deliberation. As here David, though he withstood the risings of his heart, yet hee was troubled, that hee had so vile a heart that would rise up against God, and therefore takes it downe. Who is there that hath not cause to be humbled, not only for his corruption, but that hee doth not resist it with that strength, nor labour to prevent it with that diligence, which his heart tells him he might?

Wee cannot have too deepe apprehensions of this breeding sinne, the mother and nurse of all abominations, for the more we consider the height, the depth, the breadth, and length of it, the more shall wee bee humbled in our selves, and magnisse the height, the depth, the breadth, and the length of Gods mercy in C H R I S T. The favourers of nature are alwayes the enemies of grace; This which some think and speake so weakly and faintly of, is a worse enemy to us then the devill himselfe:

Ephel.3.18

himselfe; a more neere, a more restlesse, a more traiterous enemy, for by intelligence with it the Devill dothus all the hurt he doth, and by it maintaines forts in us against goodnesse. This is that which either by discouragement or contrariety hinders from good; or else by deadnesse, tediousnesse, distractions, or corrupt aimes hinders us in doing good, this putteth us on to evill, and abuseth what is good in us, or from w, to cover or colour finne; and furnishes us with reasons either to maintaine what is evill, or shifts to translate it upon false causes, or fences to arme us against whatsoever shall oppose us in our wicked waies: Though it neither can nor will be good, yet it would bee thought to be so by others, and enforces a conceit upon it selfe that it is good. It imprifons and keepes downe all light that may discover it, both within it selfe, and without it self, if it lie in its power: It flatters it selfe, and would have all the world flatter it too, which if it doth nor, it frets; especially if it bee once

once discovered and crossed: hence comes all the plotting against goodnesse, that sinne may reigne without controule. Is it not a lamentable case that man, who out of the very principles of nature cannot but desire happinesse and abhorre misery, yet should bee in love with eternall misery in the causes of it, and abhorre happinesse in the wayes that leade unto it? This sheweth us what a wonderfull deordination and disorder is brought upon mans nature; For every other creature is naturally carried to that which is helpfull unto it, and shunneth that which is any way hurtfull and offenfive; Onely man is in love with his owne bane, and fights for those lusts that fight against his soule.

Sixefold duty in respect of naturall corruption.

I.

Our duty is, i. to labour to see this sinfull disposition of ours not onely as it is discovered in the Scriptures, but as it discovers it selfe in our owne hearts; this must must be done by the light and teaching of Gods Spirit, who

knowes

Cap, 12.

knowes us and all the turnings and windings and by-wayes of our soules, better then wee know our selves. Wee must see it as the most odious and loth-some thing in the world, making our natures contrary to Gods pure nature, and of all other duties making us most indisposed to spiritual duties, wherein wee should have neerest communion with God; because it seizeth on the very spirits of our mindes.

2. Wee should looke upon it, as worse then any of those filthy streames that come from it, nay then all the impure issues of our lives together; there is more fire in the fornace then in the sparkles: There is more poyson in the root then in all the branches; for if the streame were stopt, & the branches cut off, and the sparkles quenched, yet there would bee a perpetuall supply; as in good things, the cause is better then the effect, so in ill things the cause is worse. Every fruit should make this poysonfull root more hatefull to us, and the root should make us hate the fruit more, as comming from so bad a root,

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Evills of not bewailing our corrupt nature.

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as being worse in the cause, then in it selfe; the affection is worse then the action, which may be forced or counterfeited. Wee cry out upon particular finnes, but are not humbled as wee should be for our impure dispositions; Without the fight of which there can be no found repentance arising from the deep and through confideration of fin; no defire to be new moulded, without which we can never enterinto so holy a place as heaven; no selfe demiall till we fee the best things in us are enmity against God, no high prizing of Christ, without who our natures, our persons, and our actions are abominable in Gods fight; nor any solid peace setled in the foule which peace ariseth not from the ignorance of our corruption, or compounding with it, but from fight and hatred of it, and strength against it.

3. Consider the piritualnesse and large extent of the law of God, together with the curse annexed, which forbids not onely particular sinnes, but all the kindes, degrees, occasions, and furtherances of some in the whole breadth

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and depth of it, and our very nature it selfe so farre as it is corrupted . For want of which we fee many alive without the law, joviall and merry from ignorance of their misery, who if they did but once see their natures and lives in that glasse, it would take away that livelinesse and courage from them, and make them vile in their owne eyes; Men usually looke themselves in the lawes of the State wherin they live, and thinke themselves good enough, if they are free from the danger of penall sta. tutes; this glasse discovers onely foule spots, groffe scandalls, and breakings out: Or else they judge of themselves by parts of nature, or common grace, or by outward conformity to Religion, or else by that light they have to guide themselves in the affaires of this life, by their faire and civill carriage, &c. and thereupon live and die without any sense of the power of godlinesse, which begins in the right knowledge of our selves, and ends in the right knowledge of God. The spiritualnesse and purity of the law should reach us to consider the

Cap, 12.

Rom.7.9.

Iob 43.6.

the purity and bolinesse of God; the bringing of our soules into whose presence will make us to abhorre our selves (with 10b) in dust and ashes; contraries are best seene by setting one neere the other; Whilest we looke onely on our selves, and upon others amongst whom we live, we think our selves to be some body. It is an evidence of some sincerity wrought in the soule, not to shunne that light which may let us see the soul corners of our hearts and lives.

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4. The confideration of this like-wise should enforce us to carry a double guard over our soules, David was very watchfull, yet we see here he was surprized unawares by the sudden rebellion of his heart; we should observe our hearts as governours doe rebells and mutinous persons: Observation awes the heart; We see to what an excesse sinne groweth in those that deny themselves nothing, nor will be denied in any thing; who if they may doe what they will, will doe what they may; who turne liberty into licence, and make all their abilities and advantages

mands of overruling and unruly luts.

Cap. 12.

Were it not that God partly by his power suppresseth, and parely by his grace subdueth the disorders of mans nature for the good of fociety, and the gathering of a Church upon earth; Corruption would swell to that excesse, that it would overturne and confound all things together with it selfe. Although there bee a common corruption that cleaves to the nature of all men in generall, as men, (as distrust in GOD, selfe-love, a carnall and worldly disposition, &c.) yet God so ordereth it, that in some there is an ebbe and decrease, in others (God justly leaving them to themselves) a flow and encrease of sinfulnesse, even beyond the bounds of ordinary corruption, whereby they become worse then themselves, either like beasts in sensuality, or like devills in spirituall wickednesse; though all be blinde in spirituall things, yet some are more blinded: though all be hard hearted, yet some are more hardened: though all be corrupt in evill courses, yet some

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are more corrupted: and finke deeper into rebellion then others.

Sometimes God suffers this corruption to breake out in civil men, yea even in his owne children, that they may know themselves the better, and because semetimes corruption is weakned not onely by smothering, but by having a vent, whereupon grace stirres up in the soule a fresh hatred and revenge against it; and lets us see a ne. ceffity of having whole Christ, not onely to pardon finne, but to purge and cleanse our finfull natures. But yet that which is ill in it selfe, must not be done for the good that comes by it by accident; this must be a comfort after our furprisalls, not an encouragement before.

Caution?

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5. And because the divine nature, wrought in us by divine truth together with the Spirit of God, is the onely counter-poyson against all sinne, and whatsoever is contrary to God in us, therefore wee should labour that the truth of God may bee grafted in our hearts, that so all the powers of our soules

foules may rellish of it; that there may be a sweet agreement betwixt the foule and all things that are spirituall, that truth being ingrafted in our hearts, we may be ingrafted into Christ, and grow up in him, and put him on more and more, and be changed into his likenesse. Nothing in heaven or earth will worke out corruption and change our dispositions but the spirit of Christ, clothing divine truths, with a divine power to this purpose.

6. When corruption rifes pray it downe, as S. Paul did, and to strengthen thy prayer, claime the promise of the new covenant that God would circum. cife our hearts, and wash us with cleane water, that hee would write his law in our bearts and give us his holy spirit when we begge it; And looke upon Christ as a publique fountaine open for Indah and Zach.13.

Iera (alem towash in. Herein confists our comfort, 1. that Christ hath all fulnesse for us, and that our nature is perfect in him; 2. Thar Christ in our nature hath satisfied divine justice, not onely for the sinne of

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Cap. 12.

6. 2 Cor.12.8

Ezek. 36. 25.27.

despe-

desperation. Many out of a misconceit think that corruption is greatest when they feele it most, whereas indeed, the lesse wee see it and lament it, the more it is. Sighes and groanes of the soule are like the pores of the body, out of which in diseased persons sicke humours breake forth, and so become lesse. The more we see and grieve for pride, which is an immediate issue of our corrupted nature, the lesse it is, because wee see it by a contrary grace; the more fight the more hatred, the more hatred of finne the more love of grace, and the more love the more life, which the more lively it is, the more it is sensible of the contrary: upon every discovery and conflict corruption loses some ground, and grace gaines upon it.

Cap. 12.

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CAP.

Cap. 13.

CAP. XIII.

Of imagination, sinne of it, and remedies for it.

Q. I.

Sinfulnes and vanity feated in the imagination is a cause of much disquiet. A Nd amongst all the faculties of the soule Most of the disquiet and unnecessary trouble of our lives arises from the vanity and ill government of that power of the foule which we call imagination and opinion, bordering betweene the fenses and our understanding; which is nothing else but a shallow apprehension of good or evill taken from the senses: Now because ontward good or evill things agree or disagree to the senses, and the life of sense is in us before the use of reason, and the delights of sense are present, and pleasing, and sutable to our natures: thereupon the imagination setteth a great price upon sensible good things; and the judgement it selfe since the fall, untill it hath an higher light and strength, yeeldeth to our imagination; hence it comes

to passe that the best things, if they bee Cap. 13. attended with sensible inconveniences, as want, disgrace in the world, and such like, are misjudged for evill things;

like, are misjudged for evill things; and the very worst things, if they bee attended with respect in the world and

sensible contentments, are imagined to be the greatest good: which appeares

not so much in mens words (because they are ashamed to discover their hiddes folly and atheisme) but the lives of

people speake as much, in that particular choise which they make; Many

there are who thinke it not onely a vaine but a dangerous thing to ferve

God, and a base thing to bee awed with religious respects, they count the waies

that Gods people take no better then madnesse, and that course which Go D

takes in bringing men to heaven by a plaine publishing of heavenly truths to

bee nothing but foolishnesse, and those people that regard it, are esteemed (as

the Pharisees esteemed them that heard

Christ) ignorant, base, and despicable persons; Hence arise all those salie prejudices against the wayes of holinesse,

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attended with sensible inconveniences, as want, disgrace in the world, and such like, are misjudged for evill things; and the very worst things, if they bee attended with respect in the world and sensible contentments, are imagined to be the greatest good: which appeares not so much in mens words (because they are ashamed to discover their hidden folly and atheisme) but the lives of people speake as much, in that particu-

lar choise which they make; Many there are who thinke it not onely a vaine but a dangerous thing to serve God, and a base thing to bee awed with religious respects, they count the waies

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judices against the wayes of holinesse,

Cap. 13.

Act.28.22

as they in the Acts were shy in entertaining the truth, because it was a may every where spoken against. The doctrine of the Crosse, hath the crosse alwayes fallowing it, which imagination counteth the most odious and bitter thing in the world.

This imagination of ours is become the feat of vanity, and thereupon of vexation to us, because it apprehends a greater happinesse in outward good things then there is, and a greater milerie in outward evill things then indeed there is, and when experience shewes us that there is not that good in those things which wee imagine to bee, but contrarily, we find much evill in them which wee never expected, hereupon the foule cannot but be troubled. The life of many men, and those not the meanest, is almost nothing else but a fancie; that which chiefly sets their wits a work, and takes up most of their time, is how to please their owne imagination, which fetteth up an excellency within it selfe, in comparison of which it despisethall true excellencie, and those things

things that are of most necessary con- | Cap. 13. sequence indeed. Hence springs ambition, and the vaine of being great in the world; hence comes an unmeasurable defire of abounding in those things which the world esteemes highly of, there is in us naturally a competition and defire of being equal or above others, in that which is generally thought to make us happy and efteemed amongst men; if wee bee not the onely men yet wee will bee somebody in the world, some thing we will have to bee highly esteemed for, wherein if we be croffed we count it the greatest misery that can befall us.

And which is worse, a corrupt defire of being great in the opinion of others, creepes into the profession of religion, if we live in those places wherein it brings credit or gaine; men will sacrifice their very lives for vaine glory: It is an evidence a man lives more to opinion and reputation of others, then to Conscience, when his griefe is more for being disappointed of that approbation which hee expects from men, then

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How finfull imaginatios work upon the; foulc.

Now the reason why imagination works so upon the soule, is, because it stirres up the effections answerable to

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the good or ill which it apprehends, and our affections stirre the humors of the body, so that oftentimes both our soules and bodies are troubled hereby.

Things worke upon the foule in this 1. Some object is presented. 2. Then it is apprehended by imagination as good and pleasing, or as evill and hurtfull. 3. If good, the defire is carried to it with delight: if evill, it is rejected with distast, and so our affections are stirred up sutably to our apprehension of the object. 4. Affections stirre up the spirits. 5. The spirits raise the humours, and so the whole man becomes moved and oftentimes distempered; this falleth out by reason of the Sympathy betweene the Soule and body whereby what offendeth one redoundeth to the hurt of the other.

And we see conserved troubles have the same effect upon us, as true. Iacob was as much troubled with the imagination of his sonnes death, as if hee had been dead indeed; imagination though it bee an empty windy thing, yet it hath reall effects. Superstitions persons

Cap. 13. | fons are as much troubled for neglecting any voluntarie fervice of mans invention as if they had offended against the direct commandement of God: thus Superstition breeds false feares, and false feare brings true vexation; it transformes God to an Idoll, imagining him to be pleased with whatsoever pleases our selves, when as wee take it ill that those who are under us should take direction from themselves, and not from us, in that which may content us. Superstition is very busie, but all in vaine, in vaine they worship mee saith God; and how can it choose but vexe and disquiet men, when they shall take a great deale of paines in vaine, and which is worse, to displease most in that wherein they thinke to please most. GoD blasteth all devised service with one demand, Who required thefe things at your bands? It were better for us to aske our selves this question before hand, Who eequired this? Why doe wee trouble our selves about that which we shall have no thanke for? Wee should not

bring God downe to our owne imagi-

mations,

Matt.IS.9

Efay 1.12.

nations, but raise our imaginations up Cap. 13. to God.

Now imagination hurteth us, 1. By false representations. 2. By preventing reason, and so usurping a censure of things, before our judgements try them, whereas the office of imagination is to minister matter to our underflanding to worke upon, and not to leade it, much lesse misseade it in any thing. 3. By forging matter out of it selfe without ground; the imaginarie grievances of our lives are more then the reall. 4. As it is an ill indrument of the understanding to devise vanity and mischiefe.

The way to cure this malady in us, is 1. To labour to bring these risings of our soules into the obedience of Gods truth and Spirit; for imagination of it selfe, if ungoverned, is a wilde, and a ranging thing; it wrongs not onely the frame of Gods worke in us, setting the baser part of a man above the higher, but it wrongs likewise the worke

The rare. medy for hurtfull imaginations.

2.Cor. 10.5.

of God in the creatures and every thing elfe, for it shapes things as it selfe pleafeth, it maketh evill good, if it pleafeth the senses, and good evill, if it be dangerous and distaltfull to the outward man; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsetled soule. As if it were a god, it can tell good and evill at its pleasure, it sets up and pulls downe the price of what it lifteth: By reason of the distemper of imagination, the life of many is little else but a dream; Many good men are in a long dreame of mifery, and many bad men in as long a dreame of happinesse, till the time of awaking come, and all because they are too much led by appearances; and as in a dreame men are deluded with false joyes, and false feares: So here; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsetled soule, therefore it is necessary that God by his word and spirit should erect a government in our hearts to captivate and order this licentious faculty.

2. Likewise it is good to present reall things to the soule, as the true riches,

riches, and true misery of a Christian, the true honour and dishonour, true beauty and deformity, the true noble-nesse and debasement of the soule; What ever is in the world, are but shadowes of things in comparison of those true realties which Religion assords; and why should were vexe our selves about a vaine shadow?

The Holy Ghost to prevent further mischiese by these outward things, gives a dangerous report of them, calling them vanity, unrighteous Mammon, unsertaine riches, thernes, yea nothing; because though they be not so in themselves, yet, our imagination over-valuing them, they prove so to us upon triall; Now knowledge that is bought by

fore God would have us prevent this by a right conceit of things before hand, least trusting to vanity wee vanish our

felves, and trusting to nothing wee become nothing our felves, and which is worse, worse then nothing.

3. Oppose serious consideration, a-

gainst vaine imagination, and because

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Pfal.39.6.

Luke 15.9. Pro.23.5.

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our imagination is prone to raise false objects, and thereby false conceits, and discourses inus; Our best way herein is to propound true objects for the minde to worke upon; as, 1. to consider the greatnesse and goodnesse of Almighty God, and his love to us in Christ. 2, the joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell. 3. the last and strict day of account. 4. The vanity of all earthly things. 5. The uncertainty of our lives, &c. From the meditation of these truthes, the soule wil be prepared to have right conceits of things, and to discourse upon true grounds of them, and thinke with it felfe, that if these things be so indeed, then I must frame my life sutable to these principles; hence arise true affestions in the soule, true feare of God, true love and defire after the best things,&c. The way to expell wind out of our bodies, is to take some wholefome nourithment, and the way to expell windy fancies from the soule, is to feed upon serious truthes.

4. Moreover, to the well ordering of this unruly faculty, it is necessary that

that our nature it selfe should be changed, for as men are so they imagine, as the treasure of the beart is, such is that which comes from it; An evill heart cannot thinke well: before the heart be changed our judgment is depraved in regard of our last end, we seeke our happinesse where it is not to be found. Wickednesse comes from the wicked as the Proverb is. If wee had as large and as quick apprehensions as Sathan himselfe, yet if the rellish of our wil & affections be not changed, they will fet the imagination a worke, to denise satisfaction to themselves. For there is a mutuall working and refluxe betwixt the will and the imagination; the imagination stirres up the will, and as the will is affected so imagination worketh.

When the law of God by the Spirit is so written in our hearts, that the law and our hearts become agreeable one to the other, then the soule is enclined and made plyable to every good thought: When the heart is once taught of God to love, it is the nature of this sweet affection (as the Apostle saith) to

thinke

Cap. 13.

Mat. 12.35. Ma'a mens, malus ani-

r Sam,24.

Mat. 22.37

thinke no evill either of God or man, and not onely fo, but it carries the bent of the whole soule with it to good, so that we love God not onely with all our heart, but with all our minde, that is, both with our understanding and imagination. Love is an affection full of inventions, and fets the wit a worke to devise good things; therefore our chiefe care should bee, that our hearts may be circumcifed and purified so, as they may be filled with the love of God, and then we shall finde this duty not onely easie but delightfull unto us. The Prophet healed the waters by casting salt into the spring, so the seasoning of the spring of our actions seafons all. And indeed what can beeexpected from man whileft hee is vanity but vaine imaginations? What can wee looke for from a Viper but poy [on? A man naturally is either weaving spiders webbs or hatching Cockatrices egges, that is, his heart is exercised either in vanity or mischiefe, for not onely the frame of the heart, but what the heart frameth is evill continually. A wicked man that is

besotted with false conceits, will admit

of

2 Kings 2.

Efay 59.5.

Gen,6.5.

of no good thoughts to enter.

5. Even when wee are good and devise good things, yet there is still some sieknesse of fancie remaining in the best of us, whereby wee worke trouble to our selves, and therefore it is necessary we should labour to restraine and limit our fancie, and flop these waters at the beginning, giving no not the least way thereunto. If it begins to grow wanton, tame the wildnesse of it by fastning it to the croffe of Christ, whom wee have pierced with our sinnes, and amongst other, with these sinnes of our spirits, who hath redeemed us from our vaine thoughts and conversations; set before it the consideration of the wrath of God. of death, and judgement, and the woefull estate of the damned,&c. and take it not off till thy heart bee taken off from straying from God; When it begins once to runne out to impertinencies, confine it to some certaine thing, and then upon examination wee shall finde it bring home some hony with it; otherwise it will bring us nothing but a fling from the bitter remembrance of our

Cap. 13.

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Zach. 12.

1 Pet.18.

Luk:19.47

our former misspent thoughts & time, which wee should redeeme and fill up, with things that most belong to our peace. Idlenesse is the houre of temptation, wherein Sathan joynes with our imagination, and sets it about his owne work. to grinde his greese, for the soule as a Mill either grinds that which is put into it, or else works upon it selfe. Imagination is the first wheele of the soule, and if that move amisse, it stirres all the inferiour wheeles amiffe with it; It ftirres it selfe, and other powers of the soule are stirred by its motion: and therefore the well ordering of this is of the greater consequence; For as the imagination conceiveth, so usually the judgement concludeth, the will chuseth, the affections are carried, and the members execute.

If it breake loose (as it will soone runne ryot) yet give no consent of the will to it; though it hath defiled the memory, yet let it not defile the will; though it be the first borne of the soule, yet let it not as Ruben ascend unto the fathers bed, that is, our will, and defile that

Berno d.

that which should be kept pure for the Cap. 13. spirit of Christ; resolve to act nothing upon it, but crosse it before it moves to the execution and practife of any thing: As in sicknesse, many times wee imagine (by reason of the corruption of our taff) Physick to be ill for us, and those meates which nourish the disease to be good, yet care of health makes us crosse our owne conceits, and take that which fancie abhorres: So if we would preserve sound spirits, wee must conclude against groundlesse imagination, and resolve that whatsoever it suggests cannot be so, because it crosses the grounds both of religion and reason: And when we finde imagination to deceive us in sensible things (as Melancholy persons are subject to mistake) we may well gather, that it will much more deceive us in our spirituall condition; And indeed such is the incoherence, impertinencie, and unreasonablenesse of imagination, that men are oft ashamed and angry with themselves asterwards for giving the least way to fuch thoughts; and it is good to chastife the 0.3

6.

the soule for the same, that it may bee more wary for time to come; whilest men are led with imagination, they worke not according to right rules prescribed to men, but as other baser creatures, in whom phantage is the chiefe ruling power, and therefore those whose will is guided by their fancies live more like beafts then men.

Wee allow a horse to praunce and skip in a pasture, which if hee doth when he is once backt by the rider, we count him an unruly and an unbroken iade, so howsoever in other creatures wee allow liberty of fancie, yet, wee allow it not in man to frisk and rove at its pleasure, because in him it is to bee

bridled with reason.

6. Especially take heed of those curfed imaginations out of which as of mother roots others spring forth; as questioning Gods Providence, and care of his children, his justice, his difregarding of what is done here below, &c. thoughts of putting off our amendment for time to come, and so blessing our

selves in an evill way; thoughts against the

the necessity of exact and circumspect walking with God, &c. When these and such like principles of Satans and the fleshes divinitie take place in our hearts, they block up the foule against the entrance of soule-saving truths, and taint our whole conversation, which is either good or evill, as the principles are by which wee are guided, and as our imagination is, which lets in all to the foule.

Cap. 13. Ephel 5.15

The Iewes in Ieremies time were fore-stalled with vaine imaginations Ier.4.14. against sound repentance, and therefore his counsell is, Wash thine heart O Ieru-Salem, how long shall vaine thoughts lodge within thee?

7. Fancie will the better bee kept within its due bounds, if wee consider the principall use thereof; Sense and imagination is properly to judge what is comfortable or uncomfortable, what is pleasing or displeasing to the outward man, (not what is morally or firitually good or ill) and thus farre by the lawes of nature and civility wee are bound to give fancie contentment both

in our selves and others, as not to heake or do any thing uncomely, which may occasion a leathing or distast in our converse with men: and it is a matter of conscience to make our lives as comfortable as may bee; as wee are bound to love, so wee are bound to use all helps that may make us levely, and indeare us into the good affections of others: As wee are bound to give no offence to the conscience of another, so to no power or faculty either of the outward or inward man of another: Some are taken off in their affection by a fancie, whereof they can give but little reason; and some are more carelesse in giving offence in this kind, then stands with that Christian circumspection and mutuall respect which were owe one to another: The Apostles rule is of large extent, What soever things are not onely true, and honest, and just, but whatsoever things are lovely, and of good report, &c. thinke of these things. Yet our maine care should bee to manifest our felves rather to mens consciences then to their imaginations. 8. It

Phil.4.8.

8. It should be our wisedome likewife to place our felves in the best conveniency of all ontward belps which may have a kinde working upon our fancie; and to take heed of the contrary, as time, place, and objects, &c. There bee good houres, and good messengers of Gods sending, golden opportunities, wherein God uses to give a meeting to his children, & breathes good thoughts into them. Even the wifest and holiest men. (as David and Solomon, &c.) had no further safety then they were carefull of well using all good advantages, and sequestring themselves from such objects as had a working power upon them; by suffering their foules to bee led by their fancies, and their hearts to runne after their eyes, they betrayed and robbed themselves of much grace and comfort, thereupon Solomon cries out with griefe and shame from his own experience, Vanitie of vanities, &c. Fancy will take fire before wee bee aware. Little things are seeds of great matters; 106 knew this, and therefore made a covenant with bis eyes. But a fooles Tob 31.1.

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Ecclef. 1.2

Preclara cogitatio.

eyes are in the corners of the earth, saith Solomon.

Sometimes the ministring of some

excellent thought from what we heare or

see, proves a great advantage of spirituall good to the soule: Whilest Saint Austen out of curiosity delighted to beare the eloquence of St. Ambrose, hee was taken with the matter it selfe, sweetly sliding together with the words into his heart. Of later times, whilest Galeaceus Caracciolus an Italian Marquesse, and Nephem to Pope Paul 5.

Beza in his

was hearing Peter Martyr reading upon 1. Corinths and shewing the deceiveablenesse of mans judgement in spiritual things, and the essicacy of divinctruth in those that belong unto God, and further using a similitude to this purpose; "If a man be walking afar "off, and see people dancing together, "and heare no noise of the musicke, hee "judges them fooles and out of their "wits; but when hee comes neerer and

"rie motion is exactly done by art;
"Now he changes his minde, and is so
"taken

"heares the musicke, and sees that eve-

"taken up with the sweet agreement " of the gesture, and the musicke, that " he is not onely delighted therewith, "but desirous to joine himselfe in the "number; so it falls out (saith hee) " with men; Whilest they looke upon " the outward carriage and conversa-"tion of Gods people, and see it diffe-"ring from others, they thinke them " fooles, but when they looke more nar-"rowly into their courses, and see a "gracious harmony betwixt their lives "and the word of God, then they be-" ginne to be in love with the beauty of " holinesse, and joyne in conformity of "holy obedience with those they scor-"ned before. This Similitude wrought so with this Noble-man, that he began from that time forward to fet his mind

One seasonable truth falling upon a prepared heart, hath oftentimes a sweet and strong operation; Luther confesseth that having heard a grave Divine Staupicius say, that that is kinde repentance which begins from the love of God, ever after that time the practise of

to the studie of heavenly things.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 13.

Doctrina
prædestina.
tionis incipit
a vulneribus
Christi.

2.Tim.1.9

Eccles. 12.

of repentance was sweeter to him. This speech of his likewise tooke well with Luther, that in doubts of predestination, we should beginne from the wounds of Christ, that is, from the sense of Gods love to us in Christ, wee should arise to the grace given us in election before the world was.

The putting of lively colours upon common truths hath oft a strong working both upon the fancy, and our will and affections: the spirit is refreshed with fresh things, or old truths refreshed; this made the Preacher seeke to sinde out pleasing and acceptable words; and our Saviour C HR I S T S maner of teaching was, by a lively representation to mens fancies, to teach them heavenly truths in an earthly sensible manner; and indeed what doe wee see or heare but will yeeld matter to a holy heart to raise it selfe higher?

We should make our fancie serviceable to us in spiritual things, and take advantage by any pleasure, or profit, or honour which it presents our thoughts withall, to thinke thus with our selves,

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What is this to the true honour, and to those induring pleasures, &c. And seeing God hath condescended to reprefent beavenly things to us under eartbly termes, wee should follow Gods dealing herein: God represents heaven to us, under the terme of a banquet, and Luk. 10.32 of a kingdome, &c. our union with Christ under the terme of a mariage, yea Christ himselfe, under the name of whatsoever is lovely or comfortable in heaven or earth. So the Lord sets out Hell to us by whatfoever is terrible or tormenting. Here is a large field for our imagination to walke in, not onely without hart, but with a great deale of spirituall gaine; If the wrath of a King bee as the roaring of a Lion, what is the wrath of the King of Kings? If fire bee so terrible, what is hell fire? If a darke dungeon bee so lothsome, what is that eternall dungeon of darkenesse? If a feast bee so pleasing, what is the continual feast of a good conscience? If the meeting of friends be so comfortable, what will our meeting together in heaven be? The Scripture by such like

Cap. 13.

Pro.15.15

termes

termes would help our faith and fancie both at once; a sanctified fancie will make every creature a ladder to heaven. And because childhood and youth are ages of fancie, therefore it is a good way to instill into the hearts of children betimes, the loving of good, and the shun. ning of evill, by such like representati. ons as agree with their fancies, as to hate hell under the representation of fire and darknesse,&c. Whilest the soule is joyned with the body, it hath not onely a necessary but a holy use of imagination, and of fenfible things whereupon our imagination worketh; what is the use of the Sacraments, but to help our soules by our senses, and our faith by imagination; as the foule receives much burt from imagination, so it may have much good thereby.

But yet it ought not to invent or devise what is good and true in religion, here fancy must yeeld to saith, and faith to divine revelation; the things we beleeve are such, as neither eye hath seene nor eare heard, neither came into the heart of man by imagination stirred up from any

r Cor. 2.9.

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any thing which we have feene or heard; they are above not onely imagination, but reason it selfe, in men and Angels : But after God hath revealed spirituall truthes, and faith hath apprehended them, then imagination hath use while the soule is joyned with the body, to colour divine truthes, and make lightsome what faith beleeves; for instance, it doth not devise either heaven or hell, but when God hath revealed them to us, our fancy hath a fitnesse of enlarging our conceits of them, even by resemblance from things in nature, and that without danger; because the joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell are fo great, that all the representations which nature affords us, fall short of them.

Imagination hath likewise some use in religion, by putting cases to the soule, as when we are tempted to any unruly action, we should think with our selves, what would I doe if some holy grave person whom I much reverence should behold me? Whereupon the soule may easily ascend higher; God sees me, and my

Cap. 13.

my owne conscience is ready to witnesse against me,&c.

Est aliquid quod ex magno viro vel tacente proficias.

9.

It helps us also in taking benefit by the example of other men; Good things are best learned, by others expressing of them to our view; the very fight often, (nay the very thought) of a good man doth good, as representing to our soules some good thing which we affect; which makes Histories and the lively Characters and expressions of vertues and vices usefull to us. The fight, yea the very reading of the fuffering of the Martyrs hath wrought fuch a hatred of that persecuting Church, as hath done marvellous good; the fight of justice executed upon malefactors, works a greater hatred of sinne in men then naked precepts can doe; So outward pompe & state in the world, doth further that awefull respect due to authority, &c.

Lastly, it would much availe for the well ordering of our thoughts, to set our soules in order every morning, and to strengthen and perfume our spirits with some gracious meditations, especi-

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ally of the chiefe end and scope wherefore we live here, and how every thing we does or befalls us, may be reduced and ordered to further the maine. The end of a Christian is glorious, and the oft thoughts of it will raise and enlarge the foule, and fet it on worke to study how to make all things ferviceable thereunto. It is a thing to be lamented that a Christian borne for heaven, having the price of his high calling fet before him, and matters of that weight and excellencie to exercise his heart upon, should be taken up with trifles, and fill both his head and heart with wanity and nothing, as all earthly things will prove ere long; and yet if many mens thoughts and discourses were distilled, they are so frothy that they would hardly yeeld one drop of true comfort.

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ð. 4.

Oh but (say some) thoughts & imaginations are free, and we shall not be accountable for them.

This is a false plea, for God hath a soveraignty over the whole soule, and

Object.

Anfw.

nd tions and thoughts not free.

2 Cor.Ie.5

his law bindes the whole inward and outward man; as wee desire our whole man should be saved by Christ, so wee must yeeld up the whole man to be governed by him; and it is the effect of the dispensation of the Gospell, accompanied with the Spirit, to captivate what soever is in man unto Christ, and to bring downe all high towring imaginations that exalt themselves against Gods Spirit. There is a divinity in the word of God powerfully unfolded, which will convince our foules of the finfulne sof naturall imaginations, as we fee in the Ideat, Corinth. 14. who feeing himselfe laid open before himselfe, cryed out, that God was in the fpenker.

I Cor.14.

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There ought to be in man a conformity to the truth and goodnesse of things, or else 1. wee shall wrong our owne soules with false apprehensions, and 2. the creature, by putting a fashion upon it otherwise then God hath made, and 3. we shall wrong God himselse the Author of goodnesse, who cannot have his true glory but from a right apprehension of things as they are;

what

what a wrong is it to men when wee shall take up false prejudices against them without ground? and so suffer our conceits to be invenomed against them by unjust suspitions, and by this meanes deprive our selves of all that good which we might receive by them; forour nature is apt to judge, and accept of things as the persons are, and not of persons according to the things themselves: this faculty exercises a tyrannie in the foule, fetting up and pulling downe whom it will. Iob judged his friends altogether vaine, because they went upon a vaine imagination and discourse judging him to bee an hypocrite, which could not but adde much to his affliction: when men take a toy in their head against a person or place, they are ready to reason as hee did, Can any good Ich 6.16. come out of Nazareth?

It is an indignity for men to be led with surmizes and probabilities, and fo to passe a rash judgement upon persons and things: Oftentimes fallhood hath a fairer gloffe of probability then truth, and vices goe masqued under the ap-

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Cap. 13.

Tob 27. : 26

Cap. 13. Similitudo mater errorum. pearance of vertue, whereupon feeming likenesse breeds a mistake of one thing for another; and Sathan oftentimes casts a mist before our imagination, that so wee might have a mishapen conceit of things; by a spirit of elusion he makes worldly things appeare bigger to us, and spiritual things lesser then indeed they are; and so by sophisticating of things our affections come to be milled. Imagination is the wombe, and Sathan the father of all monstrous conceptions and disordered lusts, which are well called descritfull lusts, and lusts of ignorance, foolish and noysome lusts, because they both spring from errour and folly, and lead unto it.

Eph.4.22. I Tim.6.9.

We see even in Religion it selfe, how the world (together with the helpe of the God of the world) is led away, if not to worship images, yet to worship the image of their owne fancie; And where the truth is most professed, yet people are prone to fancie to themselves such a breadth of Religion, as will altogether leave them comfortlesse, when things shall appeare in their true colours; they will

will conceit to embrace truth without | Cap. 13. batred of the world, and Christ without his crosse, and a godly life without persecution, they would pull a rose without pricks: Which though it may stand with their owne base ends for a while, yet will not hold out in times of change, when ficknesse of body and trouble of minde shall come; Empty conceits are too weake to encounter with reall griefes.

Some thinke Orthodoxe and right opinions to bee a plea for a loofe life, whereas there is no ill course of life but springs from some false opinion. God will not onely call us to an account how we have beleeved, disputed and reasoned & c. but how we have lived. Our care therefore should be to build our profession not on seeming appearances, but upon found grounds, that the gates of hell cannot prevaile against. The hearts of many are so vaine, that they delight to be blowne up with flattery, because they would have their imagination pleased (yea even when they cannot but know themselves abused,) and are

are grieved to have their windy bladder pricked, and so to bee put out of their conceited happinesse. Others out of a tediousnesse in serious and setled thoughts entertaine every thing as it is offered to them at the first blush, and fuffer their imaginations to carry them presently thereunto without further judging of it: the will naturally loves variety and change, and our imagination doth it service herein, as not delighting to fixe long upon any thing; hereupon men are contented both in religion, and in common life to bee missed with prejudices upon shallow grounds. Whence it is that the best things and persons suffer much in the world, the power and practife of Religion is hated under odious names, and so condemned before it is understood; Whence wee fee a necessity of getting spirituall Eye salve, for without true knowledge the heart cannot be good.

Prov.19.2.

It is just with God that those who take liberty in their thoughts should bee given up to their owne imaginations, to delight in them, and to be out of con-

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ceit with the best things, and so to reape the fruit of their owne waies. Nay. even the best of Gods people, if they take liberty herein, God will let loofe their imagination upon themselves, and fuffer them to bee intangled and vexed with their owne hearts; Those that give way to their imaginations, shew what their actions should be, if they dared; for if they forbeare doing evill out of conscience, they should as well forbeare imagining evill; for both are alike open to God and hatefull to him; and therefore oft where there is no conscience of the thought, God gives men up to the deed. The greatest, and hardest worke of a Christian is least in fight, which is the well ordering of his heart: some buildings have most workmanship under ground; it is our spirits that God who is a Spirit hath most 10h.4.24. communion withall; and the leffe freedome wee take to sinne here, the more argument of our fincerity, because there is no lawes to binde the inner man but the law of the spirit of grace, whereby wee are a law to our Celves,

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pentance where his sinne begins, in his thoughts, which are the next issue of his heart. God counts it an honour when wee regard his all-seeing eye so much, as that wee will not take liberty to our selves in that which is offensive to him, no not in our hearts, wherein no creature can hinder us; It is an argument that the Spirit hath set up a kingdom and order in our hearts, when our spirits rise within us against any thing that lifts it selfe up against goodnesse.

5. 5.

Object.

Many flatter themselves, from an impossibility of ruling their imaginations, and are ready to lay all upon insirmity and naturall weaknesse, &c.

Anfiv.
Not impossible to tule the imagination, and how.

But such must know that if wee bee sound Christians, the Spirit of G o D will enable us to doe all things (Evangelically) that we are called unto, if we give way without checke to the motions thereof; where the Spirit is, it is such a light, as discovers not onely dunghills, but motes themselves, even light

light and flying imaginations, and aba- Cap. 13. feth the foule for them, and by degrees purgeth them out; and if they presse (as they are as busie as flies in Summer) yet a good heart will not owne them, nor allow himselfe in them, but casts them off, as hot water doth the scumme, or as the stomacke doth that which is noisome unto it, they finde not that entertainement here which they have in carnall hearts, where the scumme soakes in; which are stewes of uncleane thoughts, shambles of cruell and bloody thoughts, Exchanges and shops of vaine thoughts, a very forge and mynt of false, politicke, and undermining thoughts, yea often a little hell of confused and blacke imaginations. There is nothing that more moveth a godly man to renew his interest every day in the perfect righteousnesse and obedience of his Saviour, then these finfull firrings of his foule, when hee findes something in himselfe alwayes inticing and drawing away his heart from God, and intermingling it selfe with his best performances. Even good thoughts

thoughts are troublesome if they come unseasonably, and weaken our exact performance of duty.

Misconceits about imagination, to be

avoided.

6. 6.

But here some misconceits must be taken heed of.

1. As wee must take heed that wee account not our imaginations to be religion: So we must not account true religion, and the power of godlinesse to bee a matter of imagination onely; as if holy men troubled themselves more then needs, when they stand upon religion and conscience, seeking to approve themselves to God in all things, and indeavouring (so farre as frailty will permit) to avoid all appearances of evill. Many men are so serious in vanities, and reall in trifles, that they count all, which dote not upon such outward excellencies as they doe (because the Spirit of GoD hath revealed to them things of a higher nature) to be fantasticks and humorous people, and so impute the worke of the first to the flesh, Gods worke to Satan, which comes neare unto blasphemy: they

1.Theff.

they imagine good men to be led with vaine conceits, but good men know them to bee so led. Not onely St. Paul, but CHRIST himselfe, were counted besides themselves, when they were earnest for God and the soules of his people. But there is enough in Religion to beare up the soule against all imputations laid upon it: the true children of Mat. 11.10 wisedome are alwayes able to justifie their Mother, and the conscionable practife of holy duties is founded upon fuch solid grounds as shall hold out when heaven and earth shall vanish.

2. Wee must know that as there is great danger in false sonceits of the way to heaven, when we make it broader than it is, (for by this meanes wee are like men going over a bridge, who thinke it broader then it is, but being deceived by some shadow, finck downe, and are fuddenly drowned; So men mistaking the strait way to life, and trusting to the shadow of their owne imagination, fall into the bottomlesse pit of hell before they are aware. In like manner the danger is great in ma-

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Act.26.24

king

Ecclef.7. 17.

Cap. 13. king the way to heaven narrower then indeed it is, by weake and superstitious imaginations, making more finnes than God hath made. The Wisemans counsell is that we should not make our selves over wicked, nor bee foolisher than we are, by devising more sinnes in our imagination, than we are guilty of.

It is good in this respect, to know our Christian liberty, which being one of the fruits of Christs death, we cannot neglect the same, without much wrong not onely to our selves, but to the rich bounty and goodnesse of God. So that the due rules of limitation bee observed, from authority, piety, sobriety, needlesse offence of others, &c. we may with better leave use all those comforts which God hath given to refresh us in the way to heaven, then refuse them; the care of the outward man bindes conscience so farre, as that wee should neglect nothing which may helpe us in a cheerefull ferving of GoD, in our places, and tend to the due honour of our bodies which are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and companions with our foules

I.Cor.z. 16,17.

soules in all performances. So that un- Cap. 13. der this pretence wee take not too much liberty to fatisfie the lusts of the body. Intemperate use of the creatures is the nurse of all passions: because our spirits which are the soules instruments, are hereby inflamed and disturbed; it is no wonder to see an intemperate man transported into any pasion.

3. Some out of their high and avery imaginations (and out of their iron and flintie Philosophy) will needs thinke ontward good and ill, together with the affections of griefe and delight stirred up thereby, to bee but opinions and conceirs of good and evill onely, not true and really so founded in nature, but taken up of our selves: But though our fancy be ready to conceit a greater hurt in outward evils then indeed there is (as in poverty, paine of body, death of friends, (c.) yet wee must not deny them to bee evills: that wormewood is bitter, it is not a conceit onely, but the nature of the thing it selfe, yet to abstaine from it altogether for the bitter-

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nesse

Cap. 13. neffe thereof is a hurtfull conceit. That honey is sweet, it is not a conceit onely, but the naturall quality of it is so, yet out of a taste of the sweetnesse, to think wee cannot take too much of it, is a misconceit paid home with loathsome bitternesse. Outward good and outward evill and the affections of delight and forrow rising thence, are naturally so, and depend not upon our opinion. This were to offer violence to nature, and to take man out of man, as if hee were not flesh but steele; Universall experience from the sensiblenesse of our nature in any outward grievance, is sufficient to damne this conceit.

The way to comfort a man in griefe, is not to tell him that it is onely a conceit of evill, and no evill indeed that he suffers; this kinde of learning will not downe with him, as being contrary to his present feeling; but the way is, to yeeld unto him that there is cause of grieving, though not of ever-grieving, and to shew him grounds of comfort stronger then the griefe he suffers. We should weigh the degrees of evill in a right right ballance, and not suffer fancie to make them greater then they are; So as that for obtaining the greatest outward good, or avoiding the greatest outward ill of suffering, wee should give way to the least evill of sinne. This is but a policy of the flesh to take away the sensiblenesse of evill, that so those checks of conscience and repentance for Sinne, which is oft occasioned thereby, might be taken away; that so men may goe on enjoying a fupid happinesse,never laying any thing to heart, nor afflicting their soules, untill their consciences awaken in the place of the damned, and then they feele that griefe returne upon them for ever, which they laboured to put away when it might have beene seasonable to them.

Cap. 13.

I have stood the longer upon this, because Sathan and his instruments by bewitching the imagination with salse appearances, misleadeth not onely the world, but troubleth the peace of men taken out of the world, whose estate is

This a very pertinent doctrine, and why. Cap. 13.

laid up safe in Christ, who (notwith-standing) passe their sew dayes here in an uncomfortable, wearisome, and unnecessary sadnesse of spirit, being kept in ignorance of their happy condition by Sathans jugling and their own mistakes, and so come to heaven before they are aware. Some againe passe their dayes in a golden dreame, and drop into hell before they thinke of it; but it is farre better to dreame of ill, and when wee awake to sinde it but a dreame, then to dreame of some great good, and when we awake to sinde the contrary.

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Lesa phantasia As the distemper of the fancie disturbing the act of reason, oftentimes breeds madnesse in regard of civill conversation; So it breeds likewise spiritual madnesse, carrying men to those things, which if they were in their right wits they would utterly abhorre; therefore wee cannot have too much care upon what wee fixe our thoughts; And what a glorious discovery is there of the excellencies of Religion that would even rayish an Angell, which may raise up, exercise, & fill our hearts?

Cap. 13.

We see our fancie hath so great a force in naturall conceptions, that it oft fets a marke and impression upon that which is conceived in the wombe. So likewise strong and bely conceits of things (having a divine vertue accompanying cf them,) transforme the foule, and breed spirituall impressions answerable to our spirituall apprehensions. It would prevent many crosses, if we would conceive of things as they are; When trouble of minde, or ficknesse of body, and death it selfe commeth, what will remaine of all that greatnesse which filled our fancies before? then we can judge soberly, and speake gravely of things. The best way of happinesse, is not to multiply honours or riches,&c. but to cure our conceits of things, and then we cannot be very much cast downe with any thing befalls us here.

Therefore when any thing is presented to our soules, which wee see is ready to worke upon us; wee should aske of our selves, upon what ground wee entertaine such a conceit, whether we shall have the same judgement after

Cap. 13.

after we have yeelded to it as now wee have? and whether wee will have the same judgement of it in sicknesse and death, and at the day of reckoning as we have for the present? That which is of it selfe evill, is alwayes so at one time as well as another; if the time will come, when wee shall thinke those things to be vaine, which now we are so eagerly fet upon, as if there were some great good in them; Why should wee not thinke so of them now, when as the reforming of our judgement may doe us good, rather then to be led on with a pleasing error untill that time, wherein the fight of our error will fill our hearts with horror and shame, without hope of ever changing our condition.

Here therefore is a speciall use of these Soliloquies, to awake the soule, and to stirre up reason cast asseepe by Sathans charmes, that so scattering the clouds through which things seeme otherwise then they are, wee may discerne and judge of things according to their true and constant nature; Demand of thy soule, Shall I alwayes bee

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of this minde? Will not the time come when this will prove bitternesse in the end? Shall I redeeme a short contentment, with lasting sorrow? Is my judge of my minde? Will not a time come when all things shall appeare as they are? Is this according to the rule, &c?

To conclude therfore, whereas there be divers principles of mens actions, as I. naturall inclination, inclining us to some courses more then others, 2. custome, which is another nature in us, 3.imagination, apprehending things upon shallow grounds; from whence springs affectation, whereby wee desire glory in things above our own strength and measure, and make shew of that, the truth whereof is wanting in us, 4. true judgement, discerning the true reasons of things. 5. Faith, which is a spirituall principle planted in the soule, apprehending things above reason, and raifing us up to conceive of all things as GOD hath discovered them. Now a found Christian should not bee lightly led with those first common grounds of naturall inclination, custome, opinion, &c.

Cap. 13.

Divers principles of mans actions.

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CAP. XIV.

Of help by others. Of true comforters, and their graces. Method. Ill successe.

§. I.

By t because we are subject to favour and flatter our selves, it is wisedome to take the benefit of a second selfe, (that is) a well chosen friend living or dead, (books I meane,) which wil speak truly without flattery of our estates. A friend is made for the time of Adversity, and two are better than one; for by this meanes our troubles are divided, and so more easily borne. The very presence of a true hearted friend yeelds often ease to our griese. Of all friends, those

There is a belpe for us against troubles in others

Pro.17.17.

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Cap. 14, that by office are to speake a word to a weary foule, are most to be regarded, as speaking to us in Christs stead. Oftentimes, (especially in our owne case) wee are blinded and benighted with passion, and then the judgement of a friend is clearer. Living friends have a three-fold priviledge, 1, their advice is sutable, and fit to our present occasion, they can meer with our grievance, so cannot bookes so wel. 2, what comes from a living friend, comes lively, as helped by his spirit. 3, in regard of our selves, what they say is apprehended with more ease, and lesse plodding and bent of minde; There is scarce any thing wherein we see God more in favour towards us, then in our friends, and their seasonable speeches; our hearts being naturally very false and willingly deceived. God often gives us up to be mislead by men, not according to bis, but our owne naughty hearts. As men are, such are their Counsellors, for such they will have, and such God lets them have. Men whose wills are stronger then their wits, who are wedded to their

Cap. 14.

their owne wayes, are more pleased to heare that which complies with their inclinations, then a harsh trueth which crosses them; this prefages ruine, be. cause they are not counsellable: wherefore Gop suffers them to bee ledde through a fooles paradife to a true prison, as men that will neither heare themselves nor others who would doe them good against their wills: It was a figne God would destroy Elies sonnes when they would heare no counfell; God fills fuch men with their owne wayes. Men in great place often in the abundance of all things elfe, want the benefit of a true friend, because under pretence of service of them men carry their owne ends, as they flatter them. selves, so they are flattered by others, and so robbed of the true judgement of themselves. Of all spirituall judgements this is the heaviest, for men to be given up to such a measure of selfe. willnesse, and to refuse spirituall balme to heale them, usually such perish without remedy, because to be wilfully mise-

rable is to bee doubly miserable, for it

addes

1.Sam.2.35

Pro.14.14

Ideo amicus deeste quia nihildeest.

Prov.29.1.

addes to our misery, that wee brought | Cap. 14. it willingly upon our selves.

It is a course that will have a blesfing attending it, for friends to joine in league one to watch over another, and observe each others wayes. It is an usuall course for Christians to joyne together in other holy duties, as hearing, receiving of the Sacrament, prayer, &c. but this fruit of holy communion which ariseth from a mutuall observing one another is much wanting; whence it is that so many droope, so many are so unchearfull in the wayes of God, and lie groaning under the burden of many cares, and are battered with so many temptations, &c. because they are left onely to their owne spirits. What an unworthy thing is it, that wee should pity a beast overloaden, and yet take no pity of a brother? whereas there is no living member of Christ but hath piritual love infused into him, and some ability to comfort others. Dead stones in an Arch uphold one another, and shall not living? It is the worke of an Angell to comfort, nay, it is the office

Cap. 14.

of the Holy Ghost to be a Comforter, not onely immediately, but by breathing comfort into our hearts together with the comfortable words of others; thus one friend becomes an Angell, nay a God to another, and there is a sweet fight of God in the face of a friend; for though the comfort given by Gods Messengers bee ordinarily most effectuall, as the bleffing of Parents (who are in Gods roome) is more effectuall than the bleffing of others upon their children: yet God hath promised a blesfing to the offices of Communion of Saints performed by one private man towards another. Can we have a greater incouragement then under God to be gainer of a foule, which is as much in Gods esteeme as if we should gaine a world? Spirituall almes are the best almes; mercy shewed to the soules of men is the greatest mercie; and wise. dome in winning of soules is the greatest wisedome in the world, because the foule is especially the man, upon the goodnesse of which, the happinesse of the whole man depends: What shining ning and flourishing Christians should wee have if these duties were performed? As wee have a portion in the communion of Saints, so wee should labour to have humility to take good, and wisedome and love to doe good. A Christian should have feeding lips, & a healing tongue; the leaves the very words of the tree of rightcousnesse have a curing vertue in them.

Some will shew a great deale of humanity in comforting others, but little Christianity; for as kinde men they will utter some cheerefull words, but as Christians they want wisedome from above to speake a gracious word in season: Nay some there are, who hinder the faving working of any affliction upon the hearts of others, by unseasonable and unfavoury discourses, either by suggesting false remedies, or else diverting men to false contentments, and so become spirituall traiters rather then friends, taking part with their worst enemies their lusts and wills. Happy is hee that in his way to heaven meeteth with a chearefull and skilfull guide and fellow-

Cap. 14. fellow-travellor, that carrieth cordials with him against all faintings of spirit: It is a part of our wisedome to salvation to make choice of fuch a one as may further us in our way; An indifferency for any company shewes a dead heart; where the life of grace is, it is sensible of all advantages and disadvantages: How many have beene refreshed by one short, apt, savoury speech? which hath begotten, as it were, new spirits in them.

Iub 2.12.

In ancient times (as wee see in the Story of 106) it was the custome of friends to meet together, to comfort those that were in misery, and lob takes it for granted, that to him that is afflicted pity should bee shewed from his friends: for besides the presence of a friend which hath some influence of comfort in it. 1. The discovery of his loving affection hath a cherishing sweetnesse in it. 2. The expression of love in reall comforts and services by supplying any outward want of the patry troubled, prevailes much; thus Christ made way for his comforts to the

Iob 6.14.

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the soules of men, by shewing outward kindnesse to their bodies: Love with the sensible fruits of it, prepareth for

any wholesome counsell. 2. After

this, wholesome words carry a speciall

cordiall vertue with them, especially when the Spirit of God in the affectio-

nate speaker joines with the mord of comfort, and thereby closeth with the

heart of a troubled patient: when all these concenter and meet together in

one, then is comfort sealed up to the

foule. The childe in Elizabeths wombe forang at the prefence and falutation of

Mary; the speech of one hearty friend cannot but revive the spirits of ano-

ther; Sympathy hath a strange force, as wee see in the strings of an Instru-

ment, which being played upon (as they fay) the strings of another instru-

ment are also moved with it. After love hath once kindled love, then the

heart being melted, is fit to receive any impression; unlesse both pieces of the

iron bee red bot they will not joyne to-

gether; two spirits warmed with the fame heat will eafily foader together.

Cap. 14.

Luk. 1.41.

Cap. 14.

Graces neceffary in dealing with another.

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1.Cor. 13.6.

Act. 13 18.

Nonest ide ferre, si quid ferendum est, & probare si quid probandum nonest.

d. 2.

In him that shall stay the minde of another there had need to bee an excellent temper of many graces; as, I. Knowledge of the grievance together with wisedome to speake a word in season, and to conceale that which may set the cure backwards. 2. Faithfulnesse with liberty, not to conceale any thing which may bee for his good, though against present liking. The very life and soule of friendship stands in freedome, tempered with wisedome and faithfulnesse. 3. Love with compassion and patience to beare all, and hope all, and not to bee easily provoked by the waywardnesse of him we deale with. Short spirited men are not the best comforters: God himselfe is said to beare with the manners of his people in the wildernesse: It is one thing to beare with a wife sweet moderation that which may be borne, and another thing to allow or approve that which is not to be approved at all. Where these graces are in the heaker, and apprehended ſо

heart will soone embrace whatsoever shall bee spoken to rectifie his judgement or affection. A good conceit of the spirit of the speaker is of as much force to prevaile as his words. Words especially prevaile, when they are uttered more from the bowels then the braine, and from our owne experience, which made even Christ himselfe a more compassionate high Priest. When men come to themselves againe, they will bee the deepest censurers of their owne miscariage.

§. 3.

Moreover, to the right comforting of an afflicted person, speciall care must be had of discerning the true ground of his grievance, the coare must be searched out; if the griefe ariseth from outward causes, then it must be carried into the right channell, the course of it must be turned another way, as in staying of blood; we should grieve for sinne in the first place, as being the evill of all evills: If the ground be sinne,

Further directions. Cap. 14.

3.

then it must be drawne to a head, from a confused griefe to some more particular sinne, that so wee may strike the right veine; but if wee finde the spirit much cast downe for particular sinnes, then comfort is presently to be applied; But if the griefe be not fully ripe, then, as we use to help nature in its offers to purge, by Physick, till the sick matter be carried away; so when conscience, moved by the spirit, begins to case it selfe by confession, it is good to help forward the worke of it, till wee finde the heart low enough for comfort to be laid upon. When Paul found the Taylor cast downe almost as low as hell, hee stands not now upon further hammering, and preparing of him for mercie, (that worke was done already,)but presently stirres him up to beleeve in the Lord Iesus Christ; here being a fit place for an interpreter to declare unto man his righteousnesse, and his mercy that belongs unto him after he hath acknowledged his personall and particular sins, which the naturall guile of the heart is

extreamely backward to doe, and yet

cannot

Ads 16.31

cannot receive any found peace till it be done: If signes of grace be discerned, here likewise is a fit place to declare unto man the faving worke of grace in his heart, which Sathan labours to hide from him. Men oft are not able to reade their owne evidences

without help.

In case of stifnesse and standing out, it is fit the Man of God should take some authority upon him, and lay a charge upon the soules of men in the name of Christ, to give way to the truth of Christ, and to forbeare putting off that mercy which is so kindly offered, when we judge it to be their portion; which course will be successfull in hearts awed with a reverend feare of grieving Gods firit. Sometimes men must bee dealt roundly withall, as David here deales with his owne soule, that so whilest we aske a reason of their dejection, they may plainly see they have no reason to be so cast downe; for oftentimes grievances are irrationall, rising from mistakes; and counsell, bringing into the soule a fresh light, dissolves those grosse fogges,

Cap. 14.

Cap. 14. fogges, and fetteth the soule at liberty. What griefe is contracted by false reason, is by true reason altered. Thus it pleaseth God to humble men by letting them see in what need they stand one of another, that so the communion of Saints may be indeared; every relation wherein we stand towards others, are so many bonds and finewes whereby one member is fitted to derive comfort to another, through lowethe bond of perfection: All must be done in this sweet affection. A member out of joynt must be tenderly set in again, and bound up, which onely men guided by the spirit of love seasoned with discretion are fit to doe, they are taught of God to doe what they should. The more of Christ is in any man, the more willingnesse and fitnesse to this duty; to which this should encourage us, that in strengthening others we strengthen our selves, and derive upon our selves the blessing pronounced on those that consider the needie, which will be our comfort here, and crowne hereafter, that God hath honoured us, to be instruments of spiri-

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Col.3.14.

Pal 41.1.

tuall good to others. It is an injunction to cofort the feeble minded, & there is an heavie imputatio on those that coforted not the weake: when men will not owne men in trouble, but as the herd of Deere for sake & push away the wounded Deere fro them: And those that are any wayes cast downe, must stoope to those wayes which God hath fanctified to convey cofort; for though sometimes the Spirit of God immediatly comforts the foule, which is the sweetest, yet for the most part the Sun of righteousnesse that hath bealing in his wings, conveyeth the beames of his comfort by the helpe of others, in whom hee will have much of our comfort to lie hid, and for this very end it pleaseth God to exercise his children (and Ministers especially) with tryalls and afflictions, that so they having felt what a troubled spirit is in themselves, might be able to cofort others, in their distresses with the same comfort wherwith they have beene comforted: God often suspends comfort from us to drive us to make use of our Christian friends, by whom hee purposeth to doe

Cap. 14

1. Theff. 5.14.

Ezek.34 4

Si illatas
molesti as
lingua dicat,
a conscientia
dolor emanat, vulnera
enim clausa
plus crucient. Greg.

R

us

Cap. 14.

us good. Oftentimes the very opening of mens grievances, bringeth ease without any further working upon them; the very opening of a veine cooles the blood. If God in the state of innocencie thought it fit man should have a helper. if God thought it fit to send an Angell to comfort Christ in his agonies, shall any man thinke the comfort of another more than needs? Sathan makes every affliction, by reason of our corruption, a temptation to us, whereupon we are to encounter not onely with our owne corruptions, but with firituall wickednesses, and need we not then that others should joyne forces with us to discover the temptation, and to confirme and comfort us against it ? for so reason joyning with reason, and affection with affection, wee come by uniting of strength, to bee impregnable. Sathan hath most advantage in solitarinesse, and thereupon sets upon Christ in the wildernesse, and upon Eve single, and it added to the glory of Christs victory, that he overcame him in a single combat, and in a place of fuch disadvantage. Those that

Mat. 4. Gen. 3.

that will be alone (at such times) doe Cap. 14. as much as in them lieth to tempt the tempter himselfe to tempt them. The Preacher gives three reasons why two Ecclef.4 9. are better than one. I. Because if one I. fall, the other may lift him up: as that which is stronger shoreth up that which is weaker, so feeble mindes are raised and kept up by the firenger: Nay, oftentimes he that is weaker in one grace, is stronger in another; one may helpe by his experience and meekenesse of love, that needs the help of another for knowledge. 2. If two lye together, one may warme another by kindling one anothers spirits; Where two meete together upon such holy grounds and aymes, there Christ by his firit makes up another, and this three-fold cable who shall breake? While leas lived, Iehoiada stood upright; While Latymer and Ridley lived, they kept up Cranmer by intercourse of letters and otherwise, from entertail ning counsells of Revolt. The Disciples presently upon Christs apprehenfion fainted, notwithstanding he laboured by his heavenly doctrine to put cou-R 2

Cap. 14.

3.

Solatium
vita, hahe.
re cui pettus
aperias.
Ambros.

2.Sam.1.

Bhil.2.27.

Miscarriages in the party that needs to be comforted.

I.

courage & comfort into them. 2. If any give an on-fet upon them, there is two to withstand it, Spirit joyning with Spirit: and because there is an acquaintance of spirits as well as of persons, those are fittest to lay open our mindes unto, in whom upon experience of their fidelity, our hearts may most safely relie. Wee lose much of our strength in the losse of a true friend; which made David bemoane the loffe of his friend 10nathan, Woe is me for thee my brother 10nathan. He lost a piece of himselfe, by losing him whom his heart so clave unto; Saint Paul accounted that God had shewed especiall mercy to him, in the recovery of Epaphroditus.

2. 4.

But there are divers miscarriages in those that are troubled, which make the comfort of others of none effect.

1. When the troubled party deales not directly, but doubleth with him that is to helpe him. Some are ashamed to acknowledge the true ground of their grievance, pretending sorrow for one thing,

thing, when their hearts tell them it Cap. 14. ariseth from another; Like the Lapwings which make greatest noise furthest from their neast, because they would not have it discovered: deceit moved our bleffed Saviour (who knew what was in the harrs of men,) to fit his answeres many times, rather to the man then to the matter.

2. Some relie too much upon particular men, Oh if they had such a one they should do well, and mislike others, (fitter perhaps to deale with them, as having more thorough knowledge of their estates,)because they would have their disease rather covered then cured; or if cured, yet with foft words, whereas no playster worketh better then that which causes smart. Some out of meere humorous fondnesse must have that which can hardly be got, or else nothing pleases them: David must needs have the waters of Bethlem when others were neerer hand: And oftentimes when men have not onely whom they desire, but such also who are sit and dexterous in dealing with a troubled spirit,

R 3

2.Sam. 23.

Cap. 14.

spirit, yet their soules feele no comfort, because they make idols of men; Whereas men at the best are but conduits of comfort, and fuch as God freely conveyeth comfort by, taking liberty oft to deny comfort by them, that fo he may be acknowledged the God of all comfort.

3. Some delude themselves, by thinking it sufficient to have a few good words spoken to them, as if that could cure them; not regarding to apprehend the same, and mingle it with faith, without which, good words lofe their working, even as wholesome

Physick in a dead stomack.

Besides miscarriages in comforting; times will often fall out in our lives, that we shall have none either to comfort us, or to be comforted by us, and then what will become of us unlesse we can comfort our felues? Men must not thinke alwayes to live upon almes, but lay up something in store for themselves, and provide oyle for their owne lamps, and bee able to draw out something from the treasury of their owne

hearts.

bearts. We must not goe to the Surge- Cap. 14. on for every scratch. No wise traveller but will have some refreshing wa. ters about him. Againe, wee are often driven to retire home to our owne hearts, by uncharitable imputations of other men; even friends sometimes become miserable comforters: it was lobs case, his friends had honest inten. [lob 2. tions to comfort him, but erred in their manner of dealing; if he had found no more comfort by reflecting upon his owne fincerity, then he received from them, who laboured to take it from him, hee had beene doubly miserable. We are most privy to our owne intentions and aimes, whence comfort must bee ferched; Let others speake what they can to us, if our owne hearts speake not with them, we shall receive no satisfaction. Sometimes it may fall out, that those which should unloose our spirits when they are bound up, mistake, the key misses the right wards, and so we lie bound still. Opening of our estate to another is not good, but when it is necessary, and it is not nenecessary. R 4

cessary, when we can fetch supply from our owne store; God would have us tender of our reputations, except in some speciall cases, wherein wee are to give glory to God by a free and full confession. Needlesse discovery of our selves to others, makes us feare the conscience of another man, as privie to that which we are ashamed hee should bee privy unto: and it is neither wife. dome nor mercy, to put men upon the racke of confession, further then they can have no ease any other way, for by this meanes we raise in them a jealousie towards us, and oft without cause, which weakneth and tainteth that love which should unite hearts in one.

CAP. XV.

Of flying to God in disquiets of soule.

Eight observations out of the text.

Quest.

Hat if neither the speech of others to us, nor the rebuke of our owne hearts will quiet the soule; Is there no other remedy lest?

Yes,

Yes, then looke up to God, the Fa. | Cap. 15. ther and fountaine of comfort, as Dawid doth here: For the more speciall meanes whereby he fought to recover himselfe, was by laying a charge upon his foule to trust in God; for having let his soule runne out too much, hee begins to recollect himselfe againe; and refigne up all to God.

Answ.

But, how came David to have the command of his owne foule, so, as to take it off from griefe, and to place it upon God, could hee dispose of his owne heart himselfe?

Queft.

Answ.

The child of God hath something in him above a man, hee hath the Spirit of God to guide his spirit: this command of David to his soule was under the command of the Great Commander: God commands David to trust in him, and at the same time infuseth strength into his soule by thinking of Gods command, and trufting to Gods power, to command it selfe to trust in God: so that this command is not onely by Autho-

anthoritie, but by vertue likewise of Gods command: As the inferiour orbes move as they are moved by a higher; So Davids spirit here, moves as it is moved by Gods Spirit, which inwardly spake to him to speake to himselfe.

David in speaking thus to his owne foule, was, as every true Christian is, a Prophet, and an instructer to himselfe: It is but as if inferiour officers should charge in the name and power of the King. Gods children bave a principle of life in them from the Spirit of God, by which they command themselves. To give charge belongs to a Superiour, David had a double Superiour above him, his owne spirit as sanctified, and Gods Spirit guiding that. Our spirits are the Spirits agents, and the Holy Spirit is Gods agent, maintaining his right in us. As God hath made man a free agent, So he guides him, and preferves that free manner of working which is agreeable to mans nature.

By this it appeares, that Davids moving of himselfe, did not hinder the Spirits moving of him, neither did the

Spirits

Spirits moving of him, hinder him from moving himselfe in a free manner; for the Spirit of God moveth according to our principles, it openeth our understandings to see that it is best to trust in God; It moveth so sweetly, as if it were an inbred principle, and all one with our owne spirits; If wee should hold our will to move it selfe, and not to be moved by the Spirit, we should make a God of it, whose property is to move other things, and not to be moved by any.

We are in some sort Lords over our owne speeches and actions, but yet, under a bigher Lord. David was willing to trust in God, but God wrought that will in him: he first makes our will good, and then works by it. It is a sa-crilegious liberty that will acknowledge no dependance upon God. Wee are wise in his wisedome, and strong in his strength, who saith, without me yee can doe nothing. Both the budde of a good desire, and the blossome of a good resolution, and the fruit of a good action, all comes from G o D. Indeed

Ergone ita
liberi esse
volunt, ut
nuc Deum
volunt habere Dominum? Aug.
de Spir. &
Lit.

John 15.

Certum est, nos velle cit volumus, sed ille facit ut velimus.
Aug.

Duties.

I.

2.

the understanding is ours whereby wee know what to doe, and the will is ours whereby wee make choice of what is best to be done; but the light whereby wee know, and the guidance whereby wee choose, that is from a bigher agent, which is ready to flow into us with present fresh supply, when by vertue of former strength wee put our selves forward in obedience to God. Let but David say to his soule being charged of God to trust, I charge theemy soule to trust in him, and hee findes a present strength inabling to it. Therefore we must both depend upon God as the first Mover, and withall set all the inferiour wheeles of our foules a going according as the Spirit of God ministers motion unto us. So shall wee bee free from selfe-considence, and likewise from neglecting that order of working which God hath established. David hearkened what the Lord said, before he said any thing to himselfe, so should wee. Gods Commands tend to this, that wee should command our selves. God, and the Minister under God, bid us

us trust in him, but all is to no purpose till grace bee wrought in the foule, whereby it bids it felfe; Our speaking to others doth no good, till they by entertaining what we fay, speake the same to their owne soules.

In this charge of David upon his owne soule, we may see diverse passages and priviledges of a gracious heart in trouble.

6. 2.

As, I. That a Christian when hee is beaten out of all other comforts, yet hath a God to runne unto. A wicked man beaten out of earthly comforts, is as a naked man in a storme, and an unarmed man in the field, or as a ship tossed in the Sea without an anchor, which prefently dashes upon rockes, or falleth upon quicksands: but a Christian when he is driven out of all comforts below, nay, when God seemes to bee angry with him, hee can appeale from God angry to God appeased, hee can wrastle and strive with God by Gods owner strength, fight with him with his own

Cap. 15.

Obser.I.

weapons

Cap. 15. weapons, and plead with God by his owne arguments. What a happy estate is this? who would not be a Christian, if it were but for this, to have something to relie on when all things else faile? The confusion and unquietnesse which troubles raise in the soule, may drive it from resting in it selfe, but there can never be any true peace setled, untill it sees and resolves what to stay upon.

2. We see here, that there is a sanctified use of all troubles to Gods children; first they drive them out of themselves, and then draw them neerer to GOD. Crosses indeed of themselves estrange us more from God, but by an over-ruling worke of the first they bring us neerer to him; The foule of it selfe is ready to misgive, as if God had too many controversies with it, to shew any favour towards it; and Sathan helpeth; because hee knowes nothing can stand and prevaile against God, or a soule that relyeth on him, therefore hee labours to breed and encrease an everlasting division betwixt

betwixt God and the soule; but let not Christians muse so much upon their trouble, but see whether it carries them, whether it brings them neerer unto God, or not; It is a never failing rule of discerning a man to be in the state of grace, when he sindes every condition draw him neerer to God; for thus it appeares that such love God, and are called of him, unto whom all things worke together for the best.

Rom.8.28

0. 4. .

2. Againe, hence weefee, that the spirit of God by these inward speeches doth awake the foule, and keepe it in a holy exercise, by stirring up the grace of faith to its proper function. It is not so much the having of grace, as grace in exercise, that preserves the soule; therefore wee should by this and the like meanes stirre up the grace of God in us, that so it may bee kept a working and in vigour and strength. It was Davids manner to awake himselfe, by bidding both heart and harpe to awake. It is the waking Christian (that hath his wit and his grace ready about him) who is the

3.

the fafe Christian; grace dormant without the exercise doth not secure us. It is almost all one (in regard of present exigence) for grace not to be and not to worke. The soule without action, is like an inftrument not played upon, or like a ship alwayes in the Haven. Mo. tion is a preservative of the purity of things. Even life it selfe is made more lively by action. The spirit of GOD whereby his children are led, is compared to things of the quickest and strongest actions, as fire and winde, &c. God himselfe is a pure act, alwayes in acting; and every thing the nearer it comes to God, the more it hath its perfection in working. The happinesse of man confifts chiefly in a gracious frame of firit, and actions sutable sweetly isfuing there-from: the very rest of heavenly bodies is in motion in their proper places. By this stirring up the grace of God in us, sparkles come to be flames, and all graces are kept bright. Troubles stirre up David, and David being stirred stirres up himselfe. 4. We

Cap. 15.

4.

d. 5.

4. We see likewise here a furtber use of Soliloquies or speeches to our own hearts; when the foule by entring into it felfe sees it selfe put out of order, then it. injoynes this duty of trusting in Godupon it: if wee looke onely on our felves and not turne to God, the worke of the soule is imperfect: then the soule worketh as it should, when as by reflecting on it selfe, it gathers some profitable conclusion, and leaveth it selfe with God. David upon reflecting on him. selfe found nothing but discouragement, but when he lookes upward to GOD, there hee findes rest. This is one end, why God fuffers the foule to tire and beat it felfe, that finding no reft in it selfe, it might seeke to him. David yeelds not so much to his passion as that it should keepe him from God. Therefore let no man truly religious pretend (for an excuse) his temper or provoking occasions, &c. for grace doth raise the soule above nature; Grace doth not only ftop the foule in an evill way, but carries

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Cap. 15.

Iam.5.17.

ries it to a contrary good, and raiseth it up to God. Though holy men be subject to like passions with others (as it is said of Elias) yet they are not so inthralled to them, as that they carry them wholly away from their God, but they heare a voice of the spirit within them, calling them backe againe to their former communion with God; and so grace takes occasion, (even from sinne) to exercise it selfe.

5.

Gen.8.11

the cause of all disquiet: the soule suffers it selfe by something here below to be drawne away from God, but can finde no rest till it returne to him againe. As Noahs Dove had no place to set her foote upon, till it was received into the Arke from whence it came. And it is Gods mercy to us, that when we have let goe our hold of God, wee should finde nothing but trouble and unquietnesse in any thing else, that so we might remember from whence wee are falten and returne home againe. That is a good trouble which frees us from the

greatest

greatest trouble, and brings with it the Cap. 15. most comfortable rest; It is but an unquiet quiet, and a restlesse rest which is out of God. It is a deepe spiritualljudgement for a man to finde too much rest in the creature: The foule that hath had a faving worke upon it, will be alwayes impatient untill it recovers its former sweetnesse in God: After Gods spirit hath once touched the foule, it will never be quiet untill it stands pointed God-ward.

But conscience may object, upon any object. offence God is offended, and therefore not

to be trusted.

It is true, where faith is not above naturall conscience; but a conscience sprinkled with the blood of Christ, is not scared from God by its infirmities and failings, but as David here, is rather stirred up to runne unto God by his distemper; and it had beene a greater sinne then his distemper not to have gone unto God. Those that have the spirit of somes in their hearts, runne not further from God after they have a little fraged from him, but though it be

Ax Tw. Treft in Godstho an offended God.

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Cap. 15.

the nature of finfull passions to breed griefe and shame, yet they will repaire to God againe, and their considence overcomes their guilt; So well are they acquainted with Gods gracious disposition.

Yet we see here, David thinkes not of trusting in God, till first he had done justice upon his owne soule, in rebuking the unruly motions thereof; Censure for sinne goeth before favour in pardoning sinne, or boldnesse to aske pardon of God; those that love God must hate ill: If our consciences condemne us of allowing any sinne, we cannot have boldnesse with God who is (light and can abide no darknesse and) greater then our consciences.

Pfal.97.10

6.

6. Moreover, hence wee see it is no easie thing to bring God and the heart together: David here as he often checkes his heart, so hee doth often charge his heart; Doubts and troubles are still gathering upon him, and his faith still gathering upon them. As one striving to get the haven, is driven back by the

waves,

waves, but recovering himselfe againe, Cap. 15. gets forward still, and after often beating back, at length obtaines the wished haven, and then is at rest. So much adoe there is to bring the foule unto God, the harbour of true comfort. It were an ease thing to be a Christian, if Religion stood onely in a few outward works and duties, but to take the foule to taske, and to deale roundly with our owne hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soule into spirituall subjection unto God; this is not so easie a matter, because the soule out of selfe-love is loath to enter into it selfe, least it should have other thoughts of it selfe then it would have; David must bid his soule trust and trust, and trust againe before it will yeeld. One maine ground of this difficulty, is that contrariety which is in the foule by reason of contrary principles: The soule so farre as it is gracious commands, so farre as it is rebellious, refifes; which drew holy Austen to "a kinde of aftonishment; The soule " commands the body and it yeelds (faith

Vade bos monfirum, & quare iflud? Aug. confess.

Cap. 15.

Non ex tota zu't non ex toto imperat, in tantum non fit quod imperat, in quantum non vult. " he) it commands it selfe, and is resisted ce by it selfe; it commands the hand to " move and it moveth with fuch an unperceiveable quicknesse that you ec can discerne no distance betwixt the cc command and the motion: Whence " comes this? but because the soule " perfectly wills not and perfectly in-" joynes not that which is good, and so " farre forth as it fully wills not, so far "ir holds backe. There should bee no need of commanding the foule if it were perfect, for then it would bee of it selfe, what it now commandeth. If David had gotten his soule at perfect freedome at the first, hee needed not have repeated his charge fo often upon it. But the soule naturally sinks downward, and therfore had need often to be wound up.

9. 8.

7. Wee should therefore labour to bring our soules (as David doth here) to a firme and peremptory resolution, and not stand mavering and as it were equally ballanced betwixt God and other

ther things; but enforce our soules, we Cap. 15, shall get little ground of infidelity else; drive your soules therefore to this iffue, either to rely upon God, or else to yeeld up it selse to the present grievance; if by yeelding it resolves to be miserable theres an end, but if it defires reft, then let it resolve upon this onely way to trust in God; and well may the soule so resolve, because in God there are grounds of quieting the foule, above all that may unsettle it: In him there is both worth to satisfie, and strength to support the soule. The best way to maintaine inward peace, is to fettle and fixe our thoughts upon that which will make us better till wee finde our hearts warmed and wrought upon thereby, and then (as the Prophet speaks) God will keepe us in peace, peace, that is, in perfect and abundant peace. This resolution stayed 10b, that though God should kill him yet hee resolved to trust in him; Answerable to our resolution-is our peace: the more resolution the more peace; Irresolution of it selfe without any grievance is full of difqui-

Efay 26.3.

Cap. 15.

er; It is an unsafe thing alwayes to begin to live; to bee alwayes cheapning and paltering with God: Come to this point once, Trust God I ought, therefore trust God I will, come what may or well.

And it is good to renew our resolutions againe and againe; for every new resolution brings the soule closer to God, and gets further in him, and brings fresh strength from him; which if wee neglect, our corruption joyning with outward hinderances will carry us further and further backward, and this will double yea multiply our trouble and griefe to recover our felves againe; wee have both winde and tide against us: Wee are going up the hill, and therefore had need to arme our selves with resolution. Since the fall, the motion of the soule upward (as of heavy bodies) is violent, in regard of corruption which weighes it downeward, and therefore all enforcement is little enough; Oppose therefore with David an invincible resolution, and then doubt not of prevailing; If wee resolve in Gods Gods power and not our owne, and bee Cap. 15. frong in the Lord, and not in our felves,! then it matters not what our troubles or temptations bee either from within, or without, for trust in God at length will triumph.

Here is a great mercy, that when Davidhad (a little) let goe his hold of God, yet God would not let goe his hold of him, but by a spirit of faith drawes him back againe to himselfe; God turnes us unto him and then wee returne. Turne us againe (faith the Psalmist) cause thy face to shine upon us, and wee shall be saved. When the soule leaves God once, it loses its way, and it selfe; and never returnes till God recalls it againe. If morall principles cherished and strengthened by good education, will enable the foule against vicious inclinations, so that though some influence of the heavens worke upon the aire, and the aire upon the firits, and the spirits upon the humors, and these incline the temper, and that inclines the foule of a man fuch and fuch wayes, yet breeding in the refined-

Pfal.80.19

æger semper

Cap. 15. er fort of civill persons, will much prevaile to draw them another way? What then may wee thinke of this powerfull grace of faith which is altogether supernaturall? Will not this carry the foule above all naturall inclinations whatfoever (though strengthened by outward occasions) if wee resolve to put it to it? David was a King of other men but here hee shewes that hee was a King of himselfe; What benefit is it (for a man) to bee Ruler over all the world, and yet remaine a flave to himselfe?

8. Againe, David here doth not onely resolve, but presently takes up his soule before it strayed too farre from God; the further and the longer the foule wanders from God, the more it intangles it selfe and the thicker darknesse will cover the foule, yea the loather it is to come to God againe, being ashamed to looke God in the face after difcontinuing of acquaintance with him; Nay the stronger the league growes betwixt

Cap. 15.

betwixt sinne and the soule, and the more there groweth a kinde of sutablenesse betwixt the soule and sinne; Too long giving way to base thoughts and affections, discovers too much complacencie and liking of finne. If we once give way, a little griefe will turne into bitter forrow, and that into a fetled pensivenesse and heavinesse of spirit; feare will grow into astonishment, and discouragement into despaire; If ever we meane to trust God, Why not now? How many are taken away in their offers and essayes, before they have prepared their hearts to cleave unto God. The fooner wee give up our felves to the Lord, the sooner wee know upon what termes we stand, and the sooner wee provide for our best security, and have not our grounds of comfort to feeke when wee shall stand most in need of them. Time will salve up griefe in the meanest of men, Reason in those that will suffer themselves to bee ruled thereby, will cure (or at least stay the fits ofit) sooner : but Faith if we stir it up, will give our soules no rest; untill Cap. 15.

till it hath brought us to our true rest (that is) to God: therefore we should presse the heart forward to God presently that Satan make nor the rent greater.

Lastly, here we see, that though the Soule be overborne by passion for a time, yet if grace bath once truely seasoned it, it will worke it selfe into freedome againe; grace as oyle will bee above. The eye when any dust falls into it, is not more tender and unquiet, till it be wrought out againe, then a gracious soule is being once troubled: the spirit as a spring will bee cleansing of it selfe more and more. Whereas the heart of a carnall man, is like a standing poole, whatsoever is cast into it, there it rests; trouble and disquietnesse in him are in their proper place; It is proper for the Sea to rage and cast up dirt: God hath set it downe for an eternall rule, that vexation and sinne shall bee inseparable. Happinesse and rest were severed from finne in heaven when the Angels fell, and in Paradise when Adam fell, and will remaine for ever separated, untill the breach be made up by faith in Christ.

Jussist Domine & sic est, ut omnu insodinatus affectus sibi sit pæna. Aug. Gen. 3.

CAP.

CAP. XVI.

Of trust in God: grounds of it: specially his providence.

DUt to come neerer to the unfolding of this trusting in God, which David useth here as a remedy against all distempers. How soever confidence and trust bee an affection of nature, yet by the fpirits sanctifying and carrying it to the right object, it becomes a grace of wonderfull use. In the things of this life usually hee that hopes most is the most unwise man; he being most deceived that hopes most, because he trusts in that which is uncertaine, and therefore deceitfull hope is counted but the dreame of a waking man. But in Religion it is farre otherwise, here, hope is the maine supporting grace of the soule, springing from faith in the promises of God.

Trust and hope are often taken in the same sense, though a distinction betwixt them hath somtimes its use: faith looks

Cap. 16. lookes to the word promising, hope to the thing promised in the word, faith lookes to the authority of the promiser, hope (especially) to the goodnesse of the promise; faith looks upon things as present, hope as to come hereafter. God as the first truth is that which faith relyes on, but God as the chiefe good, is that which tope rests on, trast or considence is nothing else, but the strength of hope; if the thing hoped for be deferred, then of necessity it enforces waiting, and waiting is nothing else but hope and trust lengthened.

Howsoever, there may be use of these and such like distinctions, yet usually they are taken promiscuously, especially in the old Testament. The nature and use of faith is set out by tearmes of staying, resting, leaning, rolling our selves upon God, &c. which come all to one, and therefore wee forbeare any further curious distinction.

Now seeing trusting in God, is a remedy against all distempers, it is necessary that wee should bring the object and the act (God and the Soule) toge-

ther:

God and the Soule must be brought together by truft.

ther; for effecting of which, it is good to know something concerning God, and fomething concerning trust. God is onely the fir object of trust, hee hath all the properties of that which should be truited on; A man can bee in no condition wherein God is at a losse and cannot helpe him; if comforts be wanting he can create comforts, not onely out of nothing, but out of discomfores; He made the Whale that swallowed up lonas, a meanes to bring him to the Shore: The Sea was a wall to the Israelites on both fides: The devouring flames were a great refreshing to the Dan 3. three children, in the fierie furnace; That trouble which we think will swallow us up, may be a meanes to bring us to our haven; So mighty is God in Efa.28.29. power, and so extellent in working. God then, and God onely is a fit foundation for the foule to build it felfe upon, for the firmer the foundation is, the stronger will the building be, therefore those that will build high must digge deepe: the higher the tree riseth, the deeper the root spreadeth and fastneth

Cap. 16.

Ionah 1.17

neth it selfe below. So it is in saith, if the foundation thereof be not firme, the soule cannot build it selfe strongly upon it; Faith hath a double principle to build on, either a principle of being, or a principle of knowing, the principle of being is God himselfe, the principle of knowing is Gods word, whereby God commeth forth (out of that bidden light which none can attaine unto) and discovereth his meaning towards us for our good.

I.

This then must 1. be supposed for a ground, that there is a God, and that God is, (that is) hath a full and eternall being, and giveth a Being, and an order of Being, to all things elle; some things have onely a Being, some things life and being, some things sense, &c. and some things have a more excellent being including all the former, as the being of creatures indued with reason; If God had a not being, nothing effe could be; In things subordinate one to another, take away the first, and you take away all the rest: Therefore this proposition (God is) is the first truth of all, and if this

we see if the heavenly bodies doe not move, there is no motion here below.

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2. In the divine nature or being, there is a substituting of three persons. every one so set out unto us, as sitted for us to trust in: the Father as a Creator, the Sonne as a Redeemer, the Holy Ghost as a Comforter, and all this in reference to us: God in the first person hath decreed the great work of our salvation, and all things tending to the accomplishment of it: God in the second person hath exactly and fully answered that decree and plot, in the worke of our redemption; God in the third person, discovers and applyes all unto us, and fits us for communion with the Father and the Sonne

thought upon out of Christ our mediator in whom hee was reconciling the world to himselfe, as being a friend both to God and us, and therefore sit to bring God and the soule together, being a middle person in the trinity; In Christ Gods nature becomes lovely to

from whom he proceeds.

1 Cor. 5.19.

us,

us, and ours to God: otherwise there is an utter enmity betwixt his pure and our impure nature: Christ hath made up the vaste gulfe betweene God and us; there is nothing more terrible to thinke on, then an absolute God out of Christ.

4.

4. Therefore for the better drawing of us to trust in God, we must conceive of him under the sweet relation of a Father; Gods nature is Fatherly now unto us, and therefore levely.

5.

our faith, it is needfull to confider what excellencies the Scripture giveth unto God, answerable to all our necessities; what sweet Names God is pleased to be knowne unto us by for our comfort, as a mercifull, gracious, long suffering God, &c.

Exo.346.

When Moses desired to see the glory of God, God thus manifested himself, in the way of goodnesse, I will make all my goodnesse passe before thee.

Exod.33.

Whatsoever is good in the creature, is first in God as in a fountaine; and it is in God in a more eminent

manner

The Soules Conflict.	269
manner and fuller measure. All grace	Cap. 163
and holineste, all sweetnesse of affection,	
all power and wisdome, &c.as it is in him,	
foit is from him; and we come to con-	
ceive these properties to bee in God,	
1.by feeling the comfort and power of	I.
them in our felves; 2. by observing	2.
these things in their measure to be in	
the best of the creatures, whence wee	en W F
arise to take notice of what grace and	
what love, what strength and wisdome	441.4
&c. is in God, by the beames of the	
which we fee in his creature, with ad-	
ding in out thoughts fulneffe peculiar	
to God, and abstracting imperfections,	
incident to the creature; for that is in	
God in the highest degree, the sparkles	
whereof is but in us.	
6. Therefore it is fit that unto all	6.
other eminencies in God, wee hould	
strengthen our faith by considering	
those glorious singularities, which are	
altogether incommunicable to the crea-	
ture, and which gives strength to his	
other properties, as that God is not	
onely gracious and loving, powerfull, wife,	
&c. but that he is infinitely, eternally,	
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and unchangeably so. All which are comprised in and drawne from that one name lehovah as being of himselfe, and giving a being to all things else, of no. thing, and able when it pleaseth him to turne all things to nothing againe.

What God is, hee maketh good by providence.

As God is thus, so he makes it good by answerable actions and dealing towards us, by his continuall providence; the confideration whereof is a great stay to our faith, for by this providence God makes use of all his former excellencies for his peoples good; for the more comfortable apprehension of which, it is good to know that Gods providence is extended as farre as his creation. Every creature (in every element and place what soever) receiveth a powerfullinfluence from God, who doth what pleaseth him, both in heaven, and earth, in the sea, and all places; But we must know, God doth not put things into a frame, and then leave them to their owne motion, as wee doe clocks, after wee have once fer them right, and ships after wee have once built them, commit them to winde and waves:

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waves; but as hee made all things, and Cap. 16. knowes all things, so (by a continued kind of creation) he preserves all things in their being and working, and governes them to their ends: Hee is the first mover that sets all the wheeles of the creature a working: One wheele may move another, but all are moved by the first If God moves not the clock of the creature stands. If God should not uphold things, they would prefently fall (to nothing) from whence they came. If God should not guide things, Sathans malice, and mans weaknesse, would soone bring all to a confusion. If God did not rule the great family of the world, all would breake and fall to pieces, whereas the wise providence of God, keepeth every thing on its right hinges. All things stand in obedience to this providence of God, and nothing can withdraw it selfe from under it; If the creature withdraw it selfe from one order of providence, it falls into another; If man (the most unruly and disordered creature of all) withdraw himselfe from Gods gracious government

Cap. 16. of him to happinesse, hee will soone fall under Gods just government of him to deserved misery; If hee shakes off Gods sweet yoake, he puts himselfe under Sathans heavy yoake, who (as Gods executioner) hardens him to destruction; and so whiles hee rushes against Gods will, he fulfils it. And whilft he will not willingly doe Gods will, Gods will is done upon him against his will.

The most casuall things fall under providence, yea (the most disordered thing in the world, (finne) and (of fins the most horrible that ever the Sunne beheld) the crucifying of the Lord of life, was guided by a hand of providence to the greatest good. For that which is ca fuall in regard of a second cause, is not so in regard of the first, whose providence is most cleerely seene in casuall events that fall out by accident, for in these the effect cannot be ascribed to the next cause, God is said to kill him, who was unwarily slaine by the falling of an axe or some instrument of death. And though man hath a freedome in

Dcut. 19.5

working, and (of all men) the Hearts of Kings

Kings are most free, yet even these are guided by an over ruling power, as the rivers of water are carryed in their channels, whither skilfull men list to derive them.

Cap. 16.

Prov.zr.r

For setling of our faith the more, God taketh liberty in using weake meanes to great purposes, and setteth aside more likely and able meanes, yea sometimes he altogether disableth the greatest meanes, and worketh often by no meanes at all. It is not from want of power in God, but from abundance & multiplying of his goodnesse, that hee useth any means at all: there is nothing that he doth by meanes, but hee is able to doe without meanes.

Nay, God often bringeth his will to passe by crossing the course and stream of meanes, to shew his own soveraignty, and to exercise our dependance; and maketh his very enemies, the accomplishers of his owne will, and so, to bring about that which they oppose most. Hence it is that we believe under hope against hope.

Pf.135.6.

But wee must know, Gods manner

274	The Soules Conflict.
Cap. 16.	of guiding things is without prejudice
	of the proper working of the things
	themselves; hee guideth them sweetly
	according to the instincts hee hath put
	into them, for,
1.	1. He furnishes creatures with a ver-
	tue and power to worke, and likewise
	with a manner of working surable to
	their owne nature, as it is proper for a
	man (when he workes) to worke with
	freedome, and other creatures by natu-
2.	rall instinct, &c. 2 God maintaineth
7.	both the power and manner of wor-
	king, and perfecteth and accomplish-
Intimior in-	eth the same by acting of it, being nee-
timo nostro.	rer to us in all wee doe, then we are to
3.	our selves. 3. He applies and stirres up
	our abilities and actions, to this or that
4.	particular as he seeth best. 4. Hee suf-
	pends or removes the hinderances of
	all actions, and so powerfully, wisely,
	and sweetly orders them to his owne
	ends. When any evill is intended, God
	either puts barsand letts to the execu-
	tion of it, or else limiteth and boun-
	deth the same both in regard of time
	and measure, so that our enemies either
1	[hall

shall not doe the evill at all, or else not | Cap. 16. so long a time, or not in such a height of mischiefe, as their malice would cary them to: The rod of the wicked may Pal. 125.3 light upon the backe of the righteous, but it shall not rest there. God knowes how to take our enemies off, sometimes by changing, or stopping their wills, by offering confiderations of some good or ill, danger or profit to them; some times by taking away, and weakning all their strength, or else by opposing an equall or greater strength against it. All the strength our enemies have rests in God; who if hee denies concourse and influence, the arme of their power, (as leroboams when he stretcht it out a gainst the Prophet) shrinkes up present. ly.

God is not onely the cause of things and actions, but the cause likewise of the cessation of them, why they fall not out at all. God is the cause why things are not as well as why they are; The cause why men favour us not, or (when they doe favour us) want prefent wisdome and ability to help us, is

Deweft prima caufa cujuscung; non effe.

from

from Gods withdrawing the concurrence of his light and strength from them. If a skilfull Physitian doth us no good, it is because it pleaseth God to hide the right way of curing at that time from him. Which should move us to see God in all that befalls us, who hath sufficient reason, as to doe what he doth, so not to doe what hee doth not, to hinder, as well as to give way.

The God of spirits hath an influence into the spirits of men, into the principles and springs of all actions; Otherwise he could not so certainely foretell things to come. Godhad a worke in Absaloms heart in that he resused the best counsell; there is nothing independent of him, who is the mover of all things, and himselfe unmoveable.

Nothing so bigh, that is above his providence; Nothing so low, that is beneath it; Nothing so large, but is bounded by it; Nothing so confused, but God can order it; Nothing so bad, but he can draw good out of it. Nothing so wisely plotted, but God can disappoint it, as Achitophells counsell; Nothing

thing so simply and unpolitiquely caried, but hee can give a prevailing iffue unto it: Nothing so freely caried, in regard of the next cause, but God can make it necessary in regard of the event: Nothing so naturall, but he can suspend in regard of operation, as heavy bodies from finking, fire from burning, &c.

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It cannot but bring strong security to the foule, to know that in all variety of changes, and intercourse of good and bad events, God and Our God, hath fuch a disposing hand. Whatsoever befalls us, all serves to bring Gods electing love, and our glorification together. Gods providence serveth his purpose to fave us. All fufferings, all blefings, all ordinances, all graces, all common gifis, nay our very falls, yea Sathan himselfe, with all his in fruments, as over-mastered, and ruled by God, have this injunction upon them, to further Gods good intendment to us, and a prohibition to doe us no harme. Augustus taxed the world for civill ends, but Gods providence used this as a meanes for Christ

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 17. Esther 6.1.

Divinum
confilium
dum devitatur impletur humana (apientia
dum reluctatur comprehenditur.
Greg.
Ex.10.11.

to bee borne at Betbleem. Ahasbuerosh could not sleepe, and thereupon calls for the Chronicles, the reading of which oc. casioned the Iewes delivery. God ost disposeth little occasions, to great purposes. And by those very wayes whereby proud men have gone about to withstand Gods counsells, they have fulfilled them, as we see in the story of Ioseph and Moses, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them.

CAP. XVII.

Of Graces to be exercised in respect of divine Providence.

E E are under a providence that is above our own; which should bee a ground unto us, of exercising those graces that tend to settle the soule in all events. As,

1. Hence to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and command the soule an holy silence, not daring to yeeld to the least rising of our hearts against God. I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth,

Pfal.39.9.

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becansethon didft it, faith David. Thus Cap. 17. Aaron when hee had lost his two sonnes, both at once, and that by fire, and by fire from heaven, which caried an evidence of Gods great displeasure with it, yet Lev. 10.1, held his peace. In this flence and hope is our strength. Flesh and blood is proane to expostulate with God, and to question his dealing, as we fee in Gedeon, leremie, Asaph, Habacuck, and others. If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? but after some strugling betweene the flesh and the spirit the conclusion will be, yet howsoever matters Pfal. 73.1. goe, God is good to Ifrael. Where a fearefull spirit, and a melancholy temper, a weake judgement, and a scrupplous and raw conscience meete in one, there Sathan and bis, together with mens owne hearts, which like Sophisters are continually cavilling against themselves, breed much disquiet, and makes the life uncomfortable. Such therefore should have a speciall care as to grow in knowledge, so to sticke close to sure and certaine grounds, and bring their consciences to the rule. Darkneffe caufeth

Cap. 17.

causeth searcs. The more light, the more considence. When we yeeld up our selves to God, we should resolve upon quietnesse, and if the heart stirres, presently use this check of David, Why are thou disquieted?

Gods wayes seeme oft to us full of contradictions, because his course is to bring things to passe by contrary meanes. There is a mystery not onely in Gods decree concerning mans eternal estate, but likewise in his providence, as why he should deale unequally with men, otherwile equall. His judgements are a great depth, which we cannot fadome, but they will swallow up our thoughts and understandings. God oft wraps himselfe in a cloude, and will not be seene till afterward. Where we cannot trace him, wee ought with S. Paul to advice and adore him. When we are in heaven, it will be one part of our happinesse, to see the harmony of those things, that seeme now confused untous. All Gods dealings will appeare beautifull in their due seasons, though we for the present see not the contigu-

ity

ity and linking together of one thing Cap. 17. with another.

2. Hence likewise proceeds a holy refigning of our selves to God, who doth all things according to the counsell of his owne will. His will is a wife will, it is guided by counsell, a soveraigne prevailing will. The onely way to have our will, is to bring it to Gods will. If we could delight in him, wee should have our bearts defire. Thus David yeeldes up himselfe unto God; Here I am, let the Lord deale with me as seemeth good unto him. And thus Elie when God foretold by Samuel the ruine of his house, quiets himselfe, It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good. Thus our bleffed Saviour Stayes himselfe, Not my will, but thy will be done. And thus the people of God, when Paul was refolved to goe to lerusalem, submitted, saying, The will of the Lord be done; a speech fit to proceed out of the heart and mouth of a Christian.

Wee may defire and long after a change of our condition, when wee looke upon the greevance it selfe, but

Volunt as Dei necessi. tas ret.

2 Sam. 15.

I Sam.z.

Acts 21.14 Vox vere Christianorum.

yet

Rev.6. 10.

Cap. 17. yet rembember still that it be with refervation, when wee looke upon the will of God, as How long Lord, holy and true, ce. Out of inferiour reasons wee may with our Saviour desire a removall of the cup, but when wee looke to the supreame reason of reasons, the will of God, here we must stoop and kisse the rod. Thus humbling our selves under his mighty hand, which by murmuring and fretting we may make more heavy, but not take off, stilladding new guilt and pulling on new judgements.

3.

3. The way patiently to suffer Gods will, is to inure our selves first to doe it. Pasive obedience springs from active. He that endures any thing, will endure it quietly, when hee knowes it is the will of God, and considers that what ever befalls him, comes from his good pleasure. Those that have not inured themselves to the yoke of obedience, will never endure the yoke of fuffering, they fume and rage as a wilde Bull in a net, as the Prophet speakes. It is worth the considering, to see two men of equall parts

Cap. 17

parts under the same crosse, how quietly and calmely the one that establish eth his soule on Christ, will beare his afflictions, whereas the other rageth as a soole, and is more beaten.

Nothing should displease us, that pleaseth God; neither should any thing be pleasing to us, that displeaseth him. This conformity is the ground of comfort. Our owne will takes away God, as much as in it lyes. If we acknowledge God in all our wayes, he will direct our pathes, and leade us the way that we should goe. The quarrell betwixt God and us is taken up, when bis will, and our will are one; when wee have facrificed our selves, and our wills unto God; when, as he is highest in himselfe, so his will hath the highest place in our hearts. Wee finde by experience, that when our wills are so subdued, that wee delight to doe, what God would have us doe, and to be what God would have us be, that then sweet peace presently rifeth to the foule land m

When wee can say, Lord, if thou wilthave me poore and disgraced, I am

Propria veluntas t cu quantum in ipfa eximit. Prov. 3.6. Esa. 48.10

Rev.6. 10.

Cap. 17. yet rembember still that it be with refervation, when wee looke upon the will of God, as How long Lord, holy and true, &c. Out of inferiour reasons wee may with our Saviour desire a removall of the cup, but when wee looke to the supreame reason of reafons, the will of God, here we must stoop and kisse the rod. Thus humbling our selves under his mighty hand, which by murmuring and fretting we may make more heavy, but not take off, stilladding new guilt and pulling on new judgements.

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Cap. 17.

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When wee can say, Lord, if thou wilt have me poore and disgraced, I am

V content

Propria veluntas Leü quantum in ipsa eximit. Prov. 3.6. Est. 48.10 Cap. 17.

content to be fo. If thou wilt have me ferve thee in this condition I am in, I willgladly doe so. It is enough to mee that thou wouldst have it so. I desire to yeeld readily, humbly, and cheerefully, to thy disposing providence. Thus a godly man sayes Amen, to Gods A. men, and purs his fiat and placet to Gods. As the Sea turnes all rivers into its own rellish; so he turnes all to his owne spirit, and makes what soever befalls him, an exercise of some vertue. A Heathen could say, that calamities did rule over men, but a wise man hath a spirit overruling allcalamities, much more a Christian. For a man to be in this estate, is to enjoy heave in the world under heaven; Gods Kingdome comes where his will is thus done and suffered.

None feele more sweet experience of Gods providence, then those that are most resolute in their obedience. After we have given glory to God in relying upon his wisdome, power, and truth, wee shall finde him imploying these for our direction, assistance, and bringing about of things to our desired issue, year above

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Cap. 17.

dangerous, and for the most part argues a false heart, as we see in Balaam, who though he knew Gods minde, yet would bee still consulting, till God in judgement gave him up to what his covetous heart led him unto. A man is not fit to deliberate, till his heart be purged of falle aymes, for else God will give him up to the darknesse of his owne spirit, and he will bee alwayes warping unfit for any byas. Where the aymes are good, there God delighteth to reveale his good pleasure. Such a soule is levell and fuitable to any good counfell, that shall bee given; and prepared to entertaine it. In what measure any lust is favoured, in that measure the foule is darkned. Even wife Solomon, whilest he gave way to his luft, had like to have lost his wisdome.

We must looke to our place wherein God hath set us; if we be in subjection to others, their authority ought to sway with us. Neither is it the calling of those that are subjects, to enquire over curiously into the mysteries of government, for that, both in peace and

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Cap. 17.

war breeds much disturbance, and would trouble all designes.

The lawes under which we live, are particular determinations of the law of God in some duties of the second table. For example; The Law of God fayes, Exact no more then what is thy due. But what in particular is thy due, and what another mans, the lawes of men determine, and therefore ought to be a rule unto us so farre as they reach; though it be too narrow a rule to be good only so farre as mans law guides unto. Yet law being the joynt reason and content of many men for publique good, hath an use for guidance of all actions that fall under the same. Where it dashes not against Gods law, what is agreeable to law, is agreeable to conscience.

The law of God in the due enlarge ment of it, to the least beginning and occasions is exceeding broad, and allowes of whatsoever stands with the light of reason, or the bonds of humanity, civility, &c. and whatsoever is a gainst these, is so farre against God law. So that higher rules be looked to

Nimis angustainnocentia est ad legem bonum este. in the first place, there is nothing lovely, or praise-worthy among men, but ought to be seriously thought on.

Nature of it selfe is wilde and untamed, and impatient of the yoke; but as beasts that cannot endure the yoke at sirst, after they are enured a while unto it, beare it willingly, & cary their work more easily by it: So the yoke of obedience, makes the life regular and quiet. The meeting of authority, and obedience together, maintaines the order and peace of the world.

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Though blindfold obedience, such as our Adversaries would have, be such as will never stand with sound peace of conscience, which alwayes lookes to have light to direct it; (for else a blinde conscience would breed blindesseares) yet in such doubtfull cases wherein we cannot winde out our selves, we ought to light our candles at others, whom we have cause to thinke by their place and parts should see surther then wee. In matters of outward estate, wee will have men skilfull, of our counsell; and V4 Christi-

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Gap. 17.

Sententia

Christians would finde more found peace, if they would advise with their godly and learned Pastors and friends. Where there is not a direct word, there is place for the counsell of a prudent man. And it is a happinesse for them whose businesse is much, and parts not large, to have the benefit of those that can give ayme, and see further then themselves. The meanest Christian understands his owne way, and knowes how to doe things with better advantage to his foule, then a gracelesse though learned man; yet is still glad of further discovery. In counsell there is peace, the thoughts being thus establish. ed.

When wee have advised and served Gods providence in the use of meanes, then it fall out otherwise then wee looke for, wee may considently conclude, that God would not have it so, otherwise to our griese we may say, it was the fruit of our owne rashnesse:

Where we have cause to thinke that wee have used better meanes in the search of grounds, and are more free

from

Cap. 17.

from partiall affections then others, there we may use our owne advise more safely. Otherwise what wee doe by consent from others, is more secure and lesse offensive, as being more countenanced.

In advice with others, it is not fufficient to be generally wise, but experienced and knowing in that wee aske, which is an honour to Gods gifts where we finde them in any kinde. When we set about things in passion, we work not as men or Christians, but in a bestiall manner. The more passion, the lesse discretion; because passion hinders the fight of what is to be done. It clouds the soule, and puts it on to action without advisement. Where passions are subdued, and the soule purged and cleared, there is nothing to hinder the impression of Gods spirit; the soule is fitted as a cleane glaffe to receive light from above. And that is the reason why mortified men are fittest to advise with in the particular cases incident to a Chfistian life.

After all advile, extract what is fit-

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Cap. 17.

rest, and what our spirits do most bend unto: For in things that concerne our selves, God affords a light to discerne out of what is spoken, what best suteth us. And every man is to follow most what his owne conscience, (after information) dictates unto him; because conscience is Gods deputy in us, and under God most to bee regarded, and whosoever sinnes against it, in his own construction sinnes against God. God vouchsafeth every Christian in some degree, the grace of spiritual prudence, whereby they are enabled to discerne what is fittest to be done in things that fall within their compasse.

7.

It is good to observe the particular becks of providence, how things joyne and meete together: fit occasions and suting of things are intimations of Gods will. Providence hath a language, which is well understood by those that have a familiar acquaintance with Gods dealing; they see a traine of providence, leading one way more then to another.

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Take especial heed of not grieving the

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Cap. 17-

the Spirit, when he offers to bee our guide, by studying evasions, and wishing the case were otherwise. This is to be Law-givers to our selves, thinking that we are wifer than God. The use of discretion is not to direct us about the end, whether wee should doe well or ill, (for a fingle heart alwayes aymes at good:) but when we refolve upon doing well, and yet doubt of the manner how to performe it: discretion lookes not so much to what is lawfull, (for that is taken for granted,) but what is most expedient. A discreet man lookes not to what is best, so much as what is fittest, in such and such respects, by eying circumstances, which if they fort not, doe vary the nature of the thing it felfe.

And because it is not in man to know his owne wayes, we should looke up unto Christ, the great Councellour of his Church, to vouchsafe the spirit of counsell and direction to us: that may make our way plaine before us, by suggesting unto us, this is the way, walke in it. Vice owe God this respect, to depend upon him

Cap. 17.

him for direction in the particular pasfages of our lives, in regard that hee is our Soveraigne, and his will is the rule, and we are to be accountable to him, as our Indge. It is Godonely that can see through businesses, and all helps and lets that stand about,

After we have rolled our felves upon God, wee should immediately take that course he enclines our hearts unto, without further distracting feare. Otherwise it is a signe wee commit not

our way unto him, when we do not quietly trust him, but remain stil as thought-

full, as if wee did not trust him. After prayer and trust followes the peace of God, and a heart void of further dividing care. Wee should therefore presently

question our hearts, for questioning his care, and not regard what feare will be ready to suggest, for that is apt to raise

conclusions against our selves, out of selfe-conceited grounds, whereby wee usurpe upon GOD, and wrong our

felves.

It was a good resolution of the three young men in Daniel, We are not carefull

Dan.3.

Phil.2. 4.

to answer thee O King. We know our du- Cap. 18. ty, let God doe with us as hee pleaseth. If Abraham had hearkened to the voice of nature, hee would never have resolved to sacrifice Isaack, but because he cast himselfe upon Gods providing, God in the Mount provided a Ramme in stead of his Sonne.

CHAP. XVIII.

Other grounds of trusting in God: namely the Promises. And twelve directions about the same.

But for the better setling of our trust in God, a further discovery is necesfary then of the nature and providence of God; for though the nature of God be written in the book of the Creatures in so great letters, as hee that runs may reade; and though the providence of God appeares in the order and use of things; yet there is another booke whereby to know the will of God towards m, and our duty towards him: We must therefore

There must be a discovery of the mind of God, as well as of his mature.

therefore have a knowledge of the promises of God, as well as of his providence; for though God hath discovered himselfe most graciously in Christ unto us, yet had we not a word of promise, wee could not have the boldnesse to build upon Christ himselfe; therefore from the same grounds (that there is a God) there must be a revealing of the will of God, for else we can never have any firme trust in him further then hee offers himselfe to be trusted; Therefore hath God opened his heart to us in his word, and reached out so many sweet premises for us to lay hold on, and stooped folow, (by gracious condescending mixed with authority) as to enter into a covenant with us to perform all things for our good: for Promises are (as it were) the stay of the soule in an imperfett condition, and so is faith in them, untill all promises shall end in performance, and faith in fight, and hope in poffesion.

Now these promises are 1. for their spring from whence they proceed, free ingagements of God; for if hee had not

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bound himselfe, who could? and 2.they | Cap. 18. are for their value pretions, and 2. for their extent large, even of all things that conduce to happinesse; and 4. for their vertue quickning and strengthning the foule, as comming from the love of God, and conveying that love unto us by his Spirit in the best fruits thereof: and 5. for their certainty, they are as fure as the Love of God in Christis, upon which they are founded, and from which nothing can separate us. For all promises are either Christ himselfe, (the promised seed) or else they are of good things made to us in him and for him, and accomplished for his sake; they are all made first to him as heire of the promise, as Angell of the covenant, as head of his body, and as our Elder brother,&c. for promises being the fruits of Gods love, and Gods love being founded first on Christ, it must needs follow that all the promises are both made, and made good to us in and through him, who is gesterday and to day, Heb. 13.3. and for ever the same.

That wee should not call Gods love into

Rom 8.39

good, and the way to attaine the same:

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men would have beene in darknesse about their sinall condition, and the way to please God and to pacific and purge their consciences, had not the word of God set downe the spring and canse of all evill, together with the cure of it, and directed us how to have communion with God, and to raise our selves above all the evill which wee meet withall betwixt us and happines, and to make us every way wise to salvation. Hence it is that the Psalmist preferres the manifestation of God by his word, before the manifestation of him, in his most glorious works.

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And thus wee see the necessity of a double principle for faith to rely on, 1.God, and 2. the word of God revealing his will unto us, and directing us to make use of all his Attributes, Relations, and providence for our good; and this word hath its strength from him who gives a being and an accomplishment unto it; for words are as the authority of him that uttereth them is; When wee looke upon a Grant in the word of a King, it stayes our mindes; because wee

Cap. 18.

Pfal. 19 7.

know he is able to make it good; and why should it not satisfie our soules to looke upon promises in the word of a God? whose words as they come from his truth and expresse his goodnesse, so they are all made good by his power and

wisedome.

By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth (without any other foundation) hangs in the mids of the world; therefore well may the soule stay it selfe on that, even when it hath nothing else in fight to relye upon; By his word it is that the covenant of day and night, and the preservation of the world from any further overflowing of waters continueth; which if it should fayle, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firme for ever, though the whole frame of nature were diffolved.

Trust must answer the truth of God.

When we have thus gotten a fit foundation for the soule to lay it selfeup. on, Our next care must be (by Trusting) to build on the same; All our miseryis either in having a falle foundation, or else in loofe building upon a true; there-

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fore having so strong a ground as Gods Nature, his providence, his promife, &c. to build upon, the only way for establishing our foules is (by trust) to rely firmly on him.

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Now the reason why Trust is so much required, is because r.it emptyeth the foule, and 2.by emptying enlargeth it, and a . seasoneth and fitteth the soule to joyne with so gracious an object, and 4. filleth it by carrying it out of it selfe unto God, who presently (so soone as he is trusted in) conveyes himselfe and his goodnesse to the soule; and thus we come to have the comfort, and God the glory of all his excellencies. Thus falvation comes to be sure unto us, whilest faith looking to the promises (and to God freely offering grace therein) refigns up it selfe to God, making no further question from any unworthinesse of its owne.

And thus wee returne to God by cleaving to him, from whom we fell by distrust, living under a new covenant lere. 3.3. meerely of grace; And no grace fitter then that which gives all to Christ,

Why faith so requifite in

Christians. I.

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considering the fountaine of all our good is(out of our felves) in him, it being fafelt for us (who were so ill husbands at the first) that it should be so. therefore it is fit we should have use of fuch a grace that will carry us out of our selves to the spring head.

The way then whereby faith quieteth the foule, is, by raising it above all discontentments and stormes here below, and pitching it upon God, thereby uniting it to him, whence it drawes vertue to oppose and bring under whatsoever troubles its peace. For the soule is made for God, and never findes reft till it returns to him againe; when God and the soule meet, there will follow contentment; God (fimply confidered) is not all our happynesse, but Godas trusted in; and Christ as wee are made one with him; The foule cannot so much as touch the bemme of Christs garment, but it shall finde vertue comming from him to sanctifie and settle it; God in Christ is full of all that is good; when the soule is emptyed, inlarged and opened by faith to receive goodnesse offered,

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Mat.g.20.

The Soules Conflict.

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there must needs follow sweet satisfa-

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Cap. 18.

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For the better strengthning of our truft, it is not sufficient that we trust in God and his truth revealed, but we must doe it by light and strength from him: Many beleeve in the truth by humane arguments, but no arguments will convince the foule but such as are fetched from the inward nature, and powerfull worke of truth it felfe; No man can know God, but by God; None can know the Sunne, but by its owne light; None can know the truth of God (lo as to build upon it) but by the truth it felf and the Spirit revealing it by its owne light to the foule; that foule which hath felt the power of truth in casting it downe, and raising it up againe, will easily be brought to rest upon it; It is neither education, nor the authority of others that professe the same truth, or that we have been so taught by men of great parts, &c. will fettle the heart, untill we finde an inward power and autho-

Directios about trufling.

I. It must be by divine light.

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rity

Cap. 18. rity in the truth it selfe thining in our hearts by its owne beames; hence comes unsetlednesse in time of troubles, because we have not a spirituall discerning of spiritual things. Supernaturall truths must have a supernaturall power to apprehend them, therefore God createth a spirituall eye and hand of the soule which is faith.

Efa. 54.13

In those that are truely converted, all faving truths are transcribed out of the Scripture into their hearts, they are taught of God; So as they finde all truths both concerning the sinfull estate, and the gracious and happy estate of man in themselves; they cary a divinity in them and about them, so as from a saving feeling they can speake of conversion, of sin, of grace, and the comforts of the spirit, &c. and from this acquaintance are ready to yeeld and give up themselves to truth remiled and to God speaking by it. Trust is never sound but upon a spirituall conviction of the truth and goodnesse we rely upon, for the essecting of which the Spirit of God must likewise subdue the rebellion and malice of

of our will, that so it may be sutable and levell to divine things, and rellish them as they are; were must apprehend the love of God and the fruits of it as better then life it selfe, and then choosing and cleaving to the same will soone follow; for as there is a sitnesse in divine truths to all the necessities of the soule, so the Soule must be sitted by them to savour and apply them to it selfe; and then from an harmony between the soule and that which it applyes it selfe unto, there will sollow not onely peace in the soule, but joy and delight surpassing any contentment in the world besides.

As there is in God to satisfie the whole soule, so trust caries the whole soule to God; this makes trust not so easie a matter, because there must bee an exercise of every faculty of the soule or else our trust is imperfest and same; there must be a knowledge of him whom we trust, and why we trust, an affiance and love, &c. Onely they that know God will trust in him; not that knowledge alone is sufficient, but because the sweetnesse of Gods love is let into the soule X 4

Cap. 18.
2.
By fubduing and changing the will.

By carying the whole foule to God.

thereby, which draweth the whole foule to him; Wee are bidden to trust perfectly in God; therefore seeing wee have a God so full of perfection to trust in; we should labour to trust perfectly in him.

By putting cases to our selves.

And it is good for the exercise of trust to put cases to our selves of things that probably may fall out, and then returne to our soules to search what strength we have if such things should come to passe; thus David puts cases; perfect faith dares put the hardest cases to its soule, and then set Godagainst all that may befall it.

Pfal.3.6. Pfal.46.3. Pfal.27.3.

Againe, labour to fit the promife to every condition thou art in there is no condition but hath a promise sutable, therefore no condition but wherein God may bee trusted, because his truth and goodnesse is alwayes the same; And in the promise, looke both to the good promised, and to the saithfulnesse and love of the promiser; It is not good to looke upon the difficulty of the thing wee have a promise against, but who promise hit, and for whose sake, and

By fitting the promife to every condition of our lives. fo see all good things in Christ made o- Cap. 18. ver tous.

We should labour likewise for a single heart to trust in God onely; there is no readier way to fall then to trust equally to two stayes, whereof one is rotten, and the other found; therefore as in point of doctrine wee are to relie upon Christ onely, and to make the Scriptures our rule onely; So in life and conversation, what ever wee make use of, yet we should enjoy and relye upon God onely, for either God is trusted alone or not at all, those that trust to other things with God, trust not him but upon pretence to cary their double mindes with leffe check.

Againe, labour that thy foule may answer all the Relations wherein it stands to God, by eleaving to him 1. as a Father by trusting on his care, 2. as a teacher, by following his direction, 3.25 a Creator by dependance on him, 4.as a husband by inseparable affection of love to him, 5. as a Lord by obedience, &c. And then we may with comfort expect whatsoever good these Relations can yeeld:

6. By trufting in God

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8. By trusting God for all things in all times. yeeld: All which, God régarding more our wants, and weaknesses, then his owne greatnesse, hath taken upon him. Shall these Relations yeeld comfort from the creature, and not from God himselse, in whom they are in their highest perfection? Shall God make other fathers and husbands faithfull, and not be faithfull Himselse? All our comfort depends upon labouring to make these Relations good to our soules.

And as we must wholly and only trust in God, so likewise we must trust him in all conditions and times, for all things that we stand in need of, untill that time comes, wherein wee shall stand in need of nothing: for as the same care of God moved him to save us, and to preserve us in the world till we be put in possession of salvation; So the same faith relyes upon God for hea. ven and all necessary provision till wee come thither; It is the office of Faith to quiet our soules in all the necessities of this life, and we have continuall use of trusting while wee are here : For even when we have things, yet God still keepes

keepes the bleffing of them in his own hands, to hold us in a continuall dependance upon him: God traines us up this way, by exercifing our trust in leffer matters, to fit us for greater; thus it pleaseth God to keepe us in a depending condition, untill he see his owne time; but so good is God that as he intends to give us what wee wait for, fo will he give us the grace and spirit of faith, to suffaine our soules in waiting till we enjoy the same. The unrulinesse of a naturall spirit is never discovered more, then when God deferres, therefore we should labour the more not to withdraw our attendance from God.

Further we must know that the condition of a Christian in this life, is not to see what he trusts God for, (hee lives by faith and not by sight) and yet that there is such a vertue in faith, which makes evident and present things to come and unscene: Because God where he gives an eye of faith, gives also a glasse of the word to see things in, and by seeing of them in the truth and power of him that promise th, they become present,

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By trusting God
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2 Cor. 5.7.

the, but to the will to reft upo the, & to the affections to joy in the: It is the nature of faithtowork, wheit feethnothing, and oftentimes best ofall then, because God shewes himself more clearly in his power, wisdome, & goodness, at such times; and so his glory shines most, and faith hath nothing else to looke upon then, whereupon it gathers all the forces of the soule together, to fasten upon God.

Why God fuffers his children to fall into great extremities.

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It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian to strengthen his faith, that so it may answer Gods maner of dealing with him in the worst times; for God usually (1. that he might perfeetly mortifie our confidence in the creature, and 2. that he might the more indeere his favours and make them fresh and new unto us, and 3. that the glory of deliverance may bee entirely his, without the creatures sharing with him; and 4. that our faith and obedience may be tried to the uttermost, and difcovered) suffers his children to fall into great extremities before he will reach forth his hand to help them, as in lebs case,

case, &c. Therefore Christians should much labour their hearts to truft in God in the deepest extremities that may befall them, even when no light of comfort appeares either from within, or without, yea, then (especially) when all other comforts faile; despaire is oft the ground of hope; when the darknesse of the night is thickest, then the morning begins to dawne; that which (to a man unacquainted with Gods dealings) is a ground of utter despaire, the same (to a mā acquainted with the waies of God) is a rise of exceeding comfort; for infinite power, & goodnes can never be at a los, neither can faith which looks to that ever be at a stand, whence it is that both God and Faith worke best alone: In a hopelesse estate a Christia will see some doore of hope opened, 1. because God shewes himself neerest to us, when we stand most in need of him; help Lord, for vain is the help of man: God is never more seen then in the Mount: He knowes our soules best, & our souls know him best in adversity; the heis most woderful in his Saints. 2 because our praiers the are (free cryes)

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Christians should trust God most in the worst times.

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cryes) fervent and frequent; God is sure to heare of us at such a time, which pleaseth him well, as delighting to heare the voice of his Beloved.

By calling to minde former experiences of Gods love.

Pfal.22. 4.

Pfal.9.10.

· For our better incouragement in these sad times, and to helpe our trust in God the more, we should often call to minde the former experiences, which either our selves or others have had of Gods goodnesse, and make use of the same for our spirituall good; Our Fathers trusted in thee, (faith the head of the Church) and were not confounded; Gods truth and goodnesse is unchangeable, he never leaves those that trust in him; so likewise in our owne experiences, we should take notice of Gods dealings with us in fundry kindes, how many wayes he hath refreshed us, and how good we have found him in our worst times: After wee have once tryed him and his truth, we may fafely trust him; God will stand upon his credit, he never failed any yet, and he will not beginto breake with us; If his nature and his word, and his former dealing hath beene fare and square, why should our hearts

hearts be wavering? thy word (faith the Psalmist) is very pure (or tryed) therefore thy servant loveth it : the word of God is as filver tryed in the furnace, purified seven times: It is good therefore to observe and lay up Gods dealings; Experience is nothing else, but a multiplyed remembrance of former bleffings, which will help to multiply our faith; tryed truth and tryed faith unto it, sweetly agree and answer one another; It were a course much tending to the quickning of the faith of Christians, if they would communicate one to another their mutuall experiences; this hath formerly beene the custome of Gods people. Come and heare all ye that feare God, and I will declare what he bath done for my foule; And David urgeth this as a reason to God for deliverance, that then the righteous would compasse him about, as rejoycing in the experience of Gods goodnesse to him; The want of this makes us upon any new tryall to call Gods care and love into question, as if hee had never formerly beene good unto us; whereas every experi-

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Cap. 18. Pfal.119. 140. Pfal.12.6.

Christians should conunicate their experiences. Pfal.66.19

Pf. 142.7.

experiment of Gods love should refresh our faith upon any freshonset; God is so good to his children even in this world, that he traines them up by daily renewed experiences of his fatherly care; for besides those many promises of good things to come, he gives us some evidence and taste of what wee believe here; that by that which wee feele wee might be strengthned in that wee looke for, that so in both (1. sense of what we feele, and 2. certainty of what we looke for) we might have full support.

By walking in the wayes of God. But yet we must trast God, as he will be trusted, (namely, in doing good;) or else we do not trust him but temps him; Our commanding of our soules to trust in God, is but an Eccha-of what God commands us first; and therefore in the same maner he commands us, we should command our selves. As God commands us to trust him in doing good, so should wee commit our soules to him in well doing, and trust him when wee are about his owne workes, and not in the workes of darknesse; we may safely expect God in his wayes of mercy, when

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when we are in his wayes of obedience; For Religionasit is a doctrine of what is to be beleeved, so it is a doctrine according to godlinesse; and the mysteries of faith are mysteries of godlinesse; because they cannot be beleeved, but they will inforce a godly conversation; where any true impression of them is, there is holinesse alwayes bred in that soule; therefore a study of bolinesse must goe jointly together with a study of trusting in God; faith lookes not onely to promises, but to directions to daty, and breeds in the foule a liking of whatfoever pleaseth God; There is a mutuall strengthning in things that are good; trusting stirres to duty, and duty streng. thens trusting, by increasing our liberty and boldnesse with God.

Againe, wee must maintaine in our soules, a high esteeme of the grace of saith; the very tryast whereof is more precious then gold, what then is the grace of saith it selfe, and the promises which it layeth hold on? certainely they transcend in morth whatever may draw us from God; whence it is that

By fetting a high price upon Faith.

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the foule fets a high price upon them, and on faith that beleeves them, It is impossible that any thing in the world should come betwixt the heart and these things (if once we truly lay hold on them) to undermine faith or the comfort we have by it; the heart is ne. ver drawne to any finfull wanity, or frighted with any terrour of trouble, till faith first loseth the fight and estimation of divine things, and forgets the necessity and excellency of them. Our Saviour Christ when hee would stirre upa desire of faith in his Disciples, shewed them the power and excellency of the same; great things stirre up faith and keepe it above, and faith keepes the foule that nothing else can take place of abode in it; when the great things of

God are brought into the heart by faith, what is there in the whole world that can out bid them? Assurance of these things upon spirituall grounds, over-rules both sense and reason, or what ever

else prevailes with carnall hearts.

Luke 17.6

Hof. 8.12.

CHAP.

Cap. 19.

CAP. XIX.

Faith to be prized, and other things undervalued, at least not to bee trusted to as the chiefe.

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Hat faith may take the better place in the soule, and the soule in God, the heart must continually be taught of what little worth all things else are, as reputation, riches, and pleasures, &c. and to see their nothingnesse in the word of God, and in experience of our felves and others, that so our heart being weaned from these things, may open it selfe to God, and imbrace things of a higher nature; otherwise baser things will be neerer the soule then faith, and keepe possession against it, so that faith will not be suffered to set up a throne in the heart; There must bee an unleo. sing of the heart, as well as a fastning of ir, and God helpes us in both: for (befides the word discovering the vanity of all things else out of God) the maine scope of Gods dealing with his children in any danger or affliction what: Y 2 foever.

The meanes to get an high c-titeeme of Faith, is to undervalucall things else

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soever is to imbitter all other things but himselfe unto them; Indeed it is the power of God properly which makes the heart to truft, but yet the Spiritof God useth this way to bring all things else out of request with us in comparison of these inestimable good things, which the soule is created, redeemed, and Cantified for: God is very jealous of our trust, and can endure no Idoll of jealonsie to be set up in our hearts. Therefore it behooves us to take notice, not onely of the deceitfulnesse of things, but of the deceitfulnesse of our bearts in the use of them; Our hearts naturally hang loose from God, and are soone ready to joyne with the creature; Now the more we observe our hearts in this, the mon wee take them off, and labour to fer them where they should be placed; for the more wee know these things, the lesse we shall trust them.

Objet.

Answ.

But may wee not trust in riches, and friends, and other outward helps at all?

Yes, so farre as they are subordinate to God our chiefe stay, with reservation and submission to the Lord, onely

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fo far, and so long as it shall please him to use them for our good. Because God ordinarily conveyes his help and good nesse to us by some creature; we must trust in God to blesse every mercy wee injoy, and to make all helps serviceable to his love towards us. In a word, we must truft & use them in & under God, and so as if all were taken away, yet to thinke God (being al-sufficient) can doe without them, what soever hee doth by them for our good. Faith preserves the chastitie of the soule, & cleaving to God is a spirituall debt which it oweth to him, whereas cleaving to the creature, is spirituall adultery.

It is an error in the foundation to substitute false objects either in Religion, or
in Christian Conversation; for I. in religion trusting in false objects as Saints, &
workes, &c. breeds false worship, and false
worship breeds Idolatry and so Gods
jealousie, and batred. 2. In Christian Conversation false objects of trust breeds
false Comforts, & true feares; for in what
measure we trust in any thing that is
uncertaine, in the same measure will

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our griefe bee when it failes us; the more men relye upon deceitfull Crutches the greater is their fall; God can neither indure false objects, nor a double object, (as hath beene shewed) for a man to rely upo any thing equally in the same ranke with himselfe; for the propounding of a double object, argues a

Iames 1.8.

pounding of a double object, argues a double heart, and a double heart is alwayes unsetled, for it will regard God

Luk.16.13

no longer then it can injoy that which it joynes together with him; Therefore it is said you cannot serve two Masters, not subordinate one to another:

Ioh. 5.44.

whence it was that our Saviour told those worldly men which followed him, that they could not believe in him, because they sought honour one of another; and in case of competition, if their honour and

reputation should come into question, they would be sure to be fall to Christ, and rather part with him then their owne credit and esteeme in the world.

David (here) by charging his soule to trust in God, saw there was nothing else that could bring true rest and quiet unto him; for whatsoever is besides

God,

God, is but a creature; and what ever is Cap. 19. in the creature, is but borrowed, and at Gods disposing, and changeable, or else it were not a creature; David saw his error soone, for the ground of his disquiet was trusting something else besides God, therefore when he began to fay, My hill is strong, I Shall not bee moved, &c. then presently his soule was troubled. Out of God there is nothing fit for the foule to stay it selfe upon; for

1. Outward things are not fitted to the firitual nature of the foule; they are dead things and cannot touch it being a lively firit, unlesse by way of

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2. They are beneath the worth of the foule, and therefore debase the soule,& draw it lower then it selfe. As a Noble woman, by matching with a meane person much injures her selfe, especially when higher matches are offered. Earthly things are not given for Stayes wholly to rest on, but for Comforts in our way to Heaven; they are no more fit for the soule, then that which hath many angles is fit to fill up that which Y 4 is !

Pfal. 30.6.

I.

Cap. 19. is round, which it cannot doe, because of the unevennesse and void places that will remaine; Outward things are never so well fitted for the soule, but that the foule will presently see some voidnesse and emptinesse in them, and in it selfe in cleaving to them; for that which shall be a fit object for the soule, must be i. for the nature of it spirituall; (as the soule it selfe is) 2.constant, 3. full, and satisfying, 4. of equal continuance with it, and 5. alwayes yeelding fresh contents: we cast away flowers, after once we have had the sweetnesse of the, because there is not still a fresh supply of sweetnesse. What ever comfort is in the creature, the foule will spend quickly, and looke still for more; whereas the comfort we have in God is undefiled and fadeth not away; How can wee trust to that for comfort, which by very trusting proves uncomfortable to us? Outward things are onely fo far forth good, as wee doe not trust in them; thernes may bee touched, but not refted on, for then they will pierce; we must not set our hearts upon those things which

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which are never evill tous, but when Cap. 19.

we fet our bearts upon them.

By trusting any thing but God, wee make it I. an Idell, 2. a curse and not a blesing, 3. it will prove a lying vanity, not yeelding that good which wee looke for, and 4. a vexation bringing that evill upon us we looke not for.

Of all men Solomon was the fittest to judge of this, because 1 hee had a large heart able to comprehend the variety of things, and 2. (being a mighty King) had advantages of procuring all outward things that might give him fatisfaction, and 3. he had a desire answerable, to fearch out and extract what ever good the creature could yeeld; and yet upon the tryall of all, hee passeth this verdict upon all, that they are but wanity; Eccles. 1.2. whilest he laboured to find that which he fought for in them, hee had like to have lost himselfe; and seeking too much to strengthen himselfe by forreine combination, hee weakned himselfe the more thereby, untill he came to know where the whole of man con- Eccles.12. fifts. So that now weeneed not try fur- 13.

Pfa. 62.10

Jere. 17.5.

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Cap. 19.

ther conclusions after the peremptory sentence of so wise a man.

But our nature is still apt to thinke there is some secret good in the forbid. den fruit, and to buy wisedome dearly, when wee might have it at a cheaper rate, even from sormer universall experience.

It is a matter both to be wondred at and pittyed, that the soule having God in Christ set before it, alluring it unto him, that hee might raise it, inlarge it, and fill it, and so make it above all other things, should yet debase & make it selfe narrower and weaker by leaning to things meaner then it selfe.

The Kingdome, Soveraignty, and large command of Man, continueth while he rests upon God, in whom hee raignes (in some sort) over all things under him; but so soone as he removes from God to any thing else, hee becomes weake and narrow and slavish presently; for,

The soule is as that which it relyes upon; if on vanity it selfe becomes vain; for that which contents the soule must

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fatisfie all the wants and defires of it, which no particular thing can doe, and the foule is more sensible of a little thing that it wants, then of all other things which it injoyes.

But see the insufficiency of all other things (out of God) to support the foul, in their severall degrees. First, Allontward things can make a man no happier, then outward things can doe, they cannot reach beyond their proper spheare: but our greatest grievances are firituall. And as for inward things, whether gifts or graces, they cannot be a sufficient stay for the minde; for 1.gifts as policy, and wisedome, &c. they are at the best very defective, especially when wee trust in them; for wisedome makes men often to rebell, and thereupon God delighteth to blast their projects: None miscarry oftner then men of the greatest parts; as none are oftner drowned then those that are most skilfull in swimming, because it makes them confident.

And for grace though it be the beginning of a new creature in us, yet it is but

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Efa. 47.10

Cap. 19.

but a creature, and therefore not to be trusted in, nay by trusting in it we imbase it, and make it more impersect; so farre as there is truth of grace, it breeds distrust of our selves, and carryes the soule out of it selfe to the fountaine of strength.

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And for any workes that proceed from grace, by trusting thereunto they prove like the reede of Ægypt, which not only deceives us, but hurts us with the splinters: Good workes are good, but confidence in them is hurtfull; and there is more of our owne in them (for the most part) to humble us, then of Gods spirit to embolden us so farre as to trust in them. Alas they have nothing from us, but weaknesse and defile. ment, and therefore fince the fall, G o D would have the object of our trust to be (out of our selves) in him; and to that purpose he useth all meanes to take us out of our selves, and from the creature, that he only might be our truft.

Yea wee must not trust trust it selfe, but God whom it relyes on, who is therefore called our trust. All the glori-

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ous things that are spoken of trust are Cap. 19. onely made good by God in Christ, who(as trusted)doth all for us.

God hath prescribed trust, as the way to carry our soules to himselfe, in whom we should only rely, and not in our imperfect trust which hath its ebbing and flowing; Neither will trust in God himselfe for the present suffice us for future strength and grace, as if trufling in God to day, would suffice to strengthen us for to morrow; but wee must renew our trust for fresh supply, upon every fresh occasion. So that wee see God alone must be the object of our truft.

There is still left in mans nature a desire of pleasure. prosit, and of what ever the creature presents as good, but the defire of gracious good is altogether loft, the soule being wholy infected with a contrary taste. Man hath a nature capable of excellency, and desirous of it, and the Spirit of God in and by the word reveales where true excellency is to bee had; but corrupt nature leaving God, seeketh it elsewhere, and so crosseth its

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owne desires, till the Spirit of God discovers where these things are to be had, and so nature is brought to its right frame againe, by turning the streame into the right current, Grace, and sinful nature, have the same general object of comfort, onely sinful nature seekes it in broken Cisterns, and grace in the fountain; the beginning of our true happinesse is from the discovery of true and false objects, so as the soule may cleerely see what is best and safest, and then sted fastly rely upon it.

We should labour to subdue the first inclination of our soules to the creatures.

It were an happy way to make the soule better acquainted with trusting in God, to labour to subdue at the sirst all unruly inclinations of the soule to earthly things, and to take advantage of the sirst tendernesse of the soule, to weede out that which is ill, and to plant knowledge and love of the best things in it; otherwise where affections to any thing below get much strength in the soule, it will by little and little be so overgrowne, that there will be no place lest in it, either for (object or all) God or trust; God cannot come to take

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his place in the heart by trust, but where Cap. 19. the powers of the soule are brought under to regard him and those great things hee brings with him, above all things else in the world beside.

In these glorious times wherein so great a light shineth, whereby so great things are discovered, what a shame is it to be so narrow hearted as to fixe upon present things; Our aymes and affections should be sutable to the things themselves set before us; Our hearts should be more and more inlarged, as things are more and more revealed to us; Wee see in the things of this life, as wisedome and experience increaseth, so our aimes and desires increase likewise; A young beginner thinkes it agreat matter if hee have a little to begin withall, but as he growes in trading, and feeth further wayes of getting, his thoughts and desires are raised higher; Children thinke as Children, but riper | Cor. 13age puts away childishnesse, when their understandings are inlarged to see, what they did not see before; we should never rest till our hearts according to

the measure of revelation of those excellent things which God hath for us, have answerable apprehension of the same. Oh if we had but faith to answer those glorious truths which God hath revealed, what manner of lives should we leade?

CHAP. XX.

Of the method of trusting in God: and the tryall of that trust.

Our trusting should
follow
Gods order of promiting.

I Astly, (to add no more) our trusting in God, should follow Gods order in promising. The first promise is of forgivenesse of sinne to repentant believers: next 2.0f healing and sanctifying grace: then 3. the inheritance of the Kingdome of Heaven to them that are sanctifyed: 4. and then the promises of all things needfull in our way to the Kingdome, &c. Now answerably, the soule being inlightned to see its danger, should looke first to Gods mercy in Christ pardoning sinne, because sinne onely divides betwixt God and the soule; next, to the promises

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promises of grace for the leading of a Christian life, for true faith desires bea ling mercy, as well as pardoning mercy, and then to Heaven and all things that may bring us thither.

By all this wee see that it is not so casie a matter as the world takes it, to bring God and the soule together by trusting on him; It must be effected by the mighty power of God, raising up the soule to himselfe, to lay hold upon the glorious power, goodnesse, and other excellencies that are in him; God is not onely the object, but the working canse of our trust; for such is our pronenesse to live by sense, and naturall reason, and fuch is the strangenesse and height of divine things, such our inclination to a selfe sufficiency and contentment in the creature, and so hard a matter is it to take off the soule from false bottomes, by reason of our unacquaintance with God and his wayes; besides such guilt still remaines upon our soules for our rebellion and unkindnesse towards God: that it makes us afraid to entertaine serious thoughts of him; and so

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Eph.1.20.

great

great is the distance betwixt his infinite Majesty, (before whom the very Angels doe cover their faces) and us, by reason of the unspiritual messes of our nature, being opposite to his most absolute purity, that we cannot be brought to any familiarity with the Lord (so as to come into his holy presence with considence to rely upon him, or any comfort to have communion with him,) till our hearts be sanctified and lifted

up by divine vigour infused into them.

Though there be some inclination by reason of the remainder of the image of God in us, to an outward morall obedience of the Law, yet alas, we have not onely no seeds of Evangelicall truths and of faith to believe them, but an utter contrariety in our natures (as corrupted) either to this, or any other good. When our conscience is once awaked; we meditate nothing but feares and terrors, and dare not so much as think of an angry God, but rather how wee may escape and fly from him. Therefore together with a deepe consideration of the grounds wee have of trusting God, it is

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necessary

necessary wee should thinke of the in- Cap. 20. disposition of our hearts unto it, especially when there is greatest neede thereof, that so our hearts may be forced to put up that petition of the Difciples to God; Lord increase our faith; Lord belpe us against our unbeleeving hearts, &c. By prayer and holy thoughts stirred up in the use of the meanes, we shall feele divine strength insused and conveyed into our foules to trust.

The more care we ought to have to maintaine our trust in God, because (befides the hardnesse of it) it is a radicall and fundamentall grace; it is as it were the mother root and great veyne whence the exercise of all graces have their beginning and strength. The decay of a plant though it appeares first from the withering of the twigs and branches, yet it arises chiefly from a decay in the roote; So the decay of grace may appeare to the view first in our company, carryage, and speeches, &c. but the primitive and originall ground of the same, is weaknesse of faith in the heart; therefore it should be our wife-

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dome (especially) to looke to the feeding of the roote; we must r. looke that our principles and foundation be good, and 2.build strongly upon them, and 3. repaire our building every day as continuall breaches shall be made upon us; either by corruptions and temptations from within or without; And wee shall finde that the maine breaches of our lives arise either fro false principles, or doubts, or mindle sne se of those that are true; All fin is a turning of the foul from God to some other seeming good, but this proceeds from a former turning of the foule from God by distrust. As faith is the first returne of the soule to God, so the first degree of departing from God is by infidelity, and from thence comes a departure by other sins, by which (as sinne is of a winding nature), our unbeliefe more increaseth, and fo the rent and breach betwixt our soules and God is made greater still (which is that Sathan would have) till at length by departing further and further from him, wee come to have that peremptory sentence of everlasting de-Partur

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parture pronounced against us; so that our departure from God now is a degree to separation for ever from him. Therefore it is Sathans maine care to come betweene God and the Soule, that sounloosing us from God, wee might more easily be drawne to other things; and if he drawes us to other things, it is but onely to unloose our hearts from God the more; for hee well knowes whilest our soules cleave close to God, there is no prevailing against us by any created policy or power.

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It was the cursed policy of Balaam to advise Balak to draw the people from God (by fornication) that so God Dimight be drawne from them: the sinne of their base affections crept into the very spirits of their minde, and drew them from God to Idolatry: Bodily adultery makes way for spiritual; An unbeleeving heart is an ill heart, and a treacherous heart, because it makes us to depart from God, the living God,&c. Therefore wee should especially take heed of it as wee love our lives, yea our best life which ariseth from the

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Cap. 20.

Sathans
study is to
unloose
our hearts
fro God.

Heb. 3.12.

union

Cap. 20. union of our foules with God.

None so opposed as a Christian, and in a Christian nothing so opposed as his faith, because it opposeth what soever opposes God, both within and witheut us: it captivates and brings under whatsoever rises up against GOD in the heart, and fets it selfe against whatfoever makes head against the foule.

And because mistake is very dangerous, and wee are prone to conceive that to trust in God is an easie matter, therefore it is needfull that we should have a right conceit of this trust what it is, and how it may be discerned, lest we trust to an untrusty trust, and to an unsteady stay.

What truft in God is.

We may by what hath been said before, partly discerne the nature of it, to be nothing elfe but an exercise of faith, whereby looking to God in Christ through the promises, wee take off our foules from all other supports, and lay them upon God for deliverance and upholding in all ill, present or future, felt or feared, and the obtaining of all good.

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good, which Go D sees expedient for Cap. 20. 115.

Now that we may discerne the truth of our trust in God the better, wee must know that true trust, is willing to be tryed and searched, and can say to God as David, New Lord what wait I for, my hope is in thee; and as it is willing to come to tryall, so it is able to endure tryall. and to hold out in opposition, as appeares in David; If faith hath a promise, it will rely and rest upon it, say slesh and bloud what it can to the contrary: true faith is as large as the promise, and will take Gods part against whatsoever opposes it.

And as faith fingles not out one part of divine truth to beleeve and rejects another, so it relyes upon God for every good thing one as well as another; the ground whereof is this, The same love of God that intends us heaven, intends us a supply of all necessaries that may

bring us thither.

A child that beleeves his father will make him Heire, doubts not but he will provide him food and nourishment,

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Thetryall of trust.

It can and is willing to endure tryall. Pfal.39.7.

It looks to all the promiles.

Fides non eligit objectum.

and give him breeding sutable to his suture condition; It is a vaine pretence to believe that God will give us heaven, and yet leave us to shift for our selves in the way.

It makes the foule bold,

I.

Where trust is rightly planted, it gives boldnesse to the soule in going to God, for it is grounded upon the discovery of Gods love first to us, and seeth a warrant from him for whatsoever it trusts him for; though the things them selves be never so great, yet they are no greater then God is willing to bestow; againe, trust is bold because it is grounded upon the worthinesse of a Mediator who hath made way to Gods savour for us, and appeares now in heaven to maintain it towards us.

4. yet huble. Yet this boldnesse is with bumility, which carryes the soule out of it selfe, and that boldnesse which the soule by trust hath with God, is from God himself; it hath nothing to alleadge from it selfe but its owne emptinesse and Gods fulnesse, its owne sinfulnesse and Gods mercy, its owne humble obedience, and Gods command; hence it is that the

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true beleevers heart is not lifted up, nor swells with selfe considence; as trust comes in that goes out; trust is never planted and growes but in an humble and low soule; trust is a holy motion of the soule to God, and motion arises from want; those (and those only) seek out abroad that want succour at home; Plants move not from place to place because they finde nourishment where they stand; but living creatures seeke abroad for their food, and for that end have a power of mooving from place to place; and this is the reason why trust is expressed by going to God.

Hereupon trust is a dependant grace answerable to our dependant condition; it lookes upon all things it hath or desires to have, as comming from God and his free grace and power; it desireth not onely wisdome, but to be wise in his wisdome, to see in his light, to be strong in his strength, the thing it selfe contents not this grace of trust, but Gods blessing and love in the thing, it cares not for any thing surther then it can have it with Gods favour and good liking.

Cap. 20.

Motus ex indigentia-

Trust is dependent

Cap. 20. 6. and obsequious.

Hence it is that truft is an obsequious and an observing grace, stirring up the foule to a defire of pleasing God in all things, and to a feare of displeasing him; Hee that pretends to trust the Lord in a course of offending, may trust to this that God will meet him in another way then he lookes for : Hee that is a tenant at curtesie will not offend his Lord; hence it is that the Apo. stle inforceth that exhortation to work out our salvation with feare and trembling. because it is God that worketh the will and the deed, and according to his good pleasure not ours; Therefore faith is an effectuall working grace, it workes in Heaven with God, it workes within us commanding all the powers of the foule, it workes without ms conquering whatfoever is in the world on the right band to draw us from God, or on the left hand to discourage us; it works against Hell and the powers of dark-

nesse; and all by vertue of trusting as it

draweth strength from God; It stirres

up all other graces and keepes them in

exercise, and thereupon the acts of o-

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Phil.2.12,

ther graces are attributed to faith as Heb. 11. It breeds a holy jealousie over our selves, lett we give God just cause to stop the influence of his grace towards us, so to let us see that wee stand not by our owne strength: Those that take liberty in things they either know or doubt will displease God, shew they want the feare of God, and this want of feare shewes their want of dependancy, and therefore want of trust; dependancy is alwayes very respective, it studieth contentment and care to comply; this was it made Enoch walke with God, and fludie how to please him; when wee know nothing can doe us good or hurt but God, it drawes our chiefe care to approve our felves to him. Obedience of faith and obedience of life will goe together; and therefore he that commits his soule to God to save, will commit his soule to God to sanctifie and guide in a way of well pleasing: Not onely the tame, but the most savage creatures, will bee at the beck of those that feede them, though they are ready to fall violently upon others; disobedience

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Cap. 20.

Heb. 12.5.

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The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 20.

To let ferveth Gods providence in the use of meanes.

bedience therefore is against the principles of nature.

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This dependancy is either in theuse of meanes, or elfe when meanes failes us; true dependancy is exactly carefull of all meanes. When God hath fet down a course of meanes, wee must not expect that God should alter his ordina. ry course of providence for us; deserved disappointment is the fruit of this presumptuous confidence; the more wee depend on a wise Physician, the more we will observe his directions, and bee carefull to use what hee prescribes; yet we must use the meanes a meanes, and not fet them in Gods room, for that is the way to blaft our hopes: The way to have any thing taken away and not bleft, is to fet our heart too much upon it. Too much griefe in parting with any thing, fhewes too much truft in the enjoying of it; And therefore he that uses the meanes in faith will alwayes joyne prayer unto God, from whom as every good thing comes, so likewise doth the blessing and successe therof; where much indeavour is and little **feeking**

seeking to God, it shewes there is little Cap. 20. trust; the Widdow that trusted in God, continued likewise in prayers day and Tim. 5.5. night.

The best discovery of our not relying too much on meanes, is, when all meanes faile, if we can still relye upon God, as being still where he was, and hath wayes of his owne for helping of us, either immediately from himselfe, or by fetting aworke other meanes (and those perhaps very unlikely) such as we thinke not of. God hath wayes of his owne. Abraham never honoured God more, then when he trusted in God for a son against the course of nature, and when he had a son, was ready to facrifice him, upon confidence that God Gen. 2.2. would raise him from the dead againe. This was the ground upon which Daniell with fuch great authority reprooved Baltbazar that he had not a care to glorifie God, in whose hand bis breath was, and all his wayes. The greatest honour we can doe unto God, is when wee fee

nothing but rather all contrary to that we looke for, then to thut our eyes to

Dan.5. 23.

inferiour

inferiour things below and looke altogether upon his Al Sufficiency; God can convey himselfe more comfortably to us when he pleaseth without meanes then by meanes. True trust as it sets God highest in the soule, so in danger and wants it hath present recourse to him, as the Conyes to the Rockes.

Pro.30.25 8. It runnes not before God.

And because Gods times and seasons are the best, it is an evidence of true trust when we can waite Gods leisure, and not make hast and so runne before God; for else the more hast the worst speed; God seldome makes any promise to his Children, but he exercise the their trust in waiting long before, as Davidsor a Kingdome, Abraham sor a sonne, the whole world for Christs comming, &c.

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9. It fills and quiets the foule upon good grounds.

One maine evidence of true trust in God is here in the text, wee see here it hath a quieting and stilling vertue, for it stayes the soule upon the sulnesse of Gods love joyned with his ability to supply our wants and releeve our necessities, though faith doth not (at the first especially) so stay the soule, as to take

take away all suspitious feares of the Cap. 20. contrary: There be so many things in trouble that presse upon the soule, as hinder the joyning of God and it together, yet the prevailing of our unbeliefe is taken away, the raigne of it is broken. If the touch of Christ in his abasement on earth drew vertue from him, certain it is that faith canot touch Christ in heaven, but it will draw a quieting and sanctifying vertue from him, which will in some measure stop the issues of an unquiet spirit; the Needle in the Compasse will stand North, though with fome trembling.

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A Ship that lyes at Anchor may bee something toffed, but yet it stil remains so fastned, that it cannot bee caried away by winde or weather; the soule after it hath cast anchor upon God, may (as we see here in David) be disquieteda while, but this unsetling tends to a deeper setling; the more we believe, the more we are established; faith is an establishing grace, by faith we stand, and stand fast, and are able to withstand whatsoever opposeth us. For what can **ftand**

stand against God, upon whose truth and power faith relyes? The devill feares not us, but him whom we flie unto for succour; It is the ground wee stand on secures us, not our selves.

As it is our happinesse, so it must be our endeavour to bring the soule close to God, that nothing get between, for then the foule hath no fure footing. When we step from God, Sathan steps in by some temptation or other presently. It requires a great deale of self deniall to bring a soule either swelling with carnall confidence, or finking by fear and distrust, to iye levell upon God, and cleave fast to him; Square will lie fast upon Square; but our hearts are so full of unevennesse, that God hath mucha do to square our hearts fit for him, not withstanding the soule hath no rest without this.

The use of trust is best knowne in the worst times, for naturally in sicknesse we trust to the Physician, in want to our wit and shifts, in danger to policy and the arme of slesh, in plenty to our present supply, &c. but when wee

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Cap. 20.

have nothing in view, then indeed should God bee God unto us. In times of distresse, when hee shewes himselfe in the wayes of his mercy and good nesse, then we should especially magnifie his name, which will move him to discover his excellencies the more, the more wee take notice of them. And therefore David strengthens himselfe in these words that he hoped for better times, wherein God would shew himselfe more gracious to him, because he resolved to praise him.

This trusting joynts the soule again, and sets it in its own true resting place, and sets God in his owne place in the soule, that is, the highest; and the creature in its place which is to bee under God, as in its owne nature, so in our nearts. This is to ascribe honour due unter God, the onely way to bring peace not the soule: Thus if wee can bring our hope and trust to the God of hope, and trust, we shall stand impregnable nallassaults, as will best appeare in hese particulars.

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CHAP.

Pfal. 29. 2.

CHAP. XXI.

of quieting the spirit in troubles for sinne. And objections answered.

O begin with troubles of the spirit, which indeed are the spirit of troubles, as disabling that which should uphold a man in all his troubles. A spirit set in tune, and affisted by a higher spirit, will stand out against ordinary affaults, but when God, (the God of the spirits of all flesh) shall seeme contrary to our spirits, whence then shall wee finde reliefe?

Here all is spirituall, God a spirit, the foule a spirit, the terrours spiritual, the devill who joynes with these a spirit; yea, that which the foule feares for the time to come, is spiritual, and not only spirituall, but eternall, unlesse it pleaset God at length to break out of the thick cloud, wherewith hee covers himselfe, and shine upon the soule, as in his own time he will.

In this estate, comforts themselves are uncomfortable to the foule; it

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quarrels with every thing, the better things it heares of, the more it is vexed. Oh what is this to mee, what have I to doe with these comforts, the more happinesse may be had, the more is my griese; As for comforts from Gods inferiour blessings, as friends, children, estate, &c. the soule is ready to misconstrue Gods end in all, as not intending any good to him thereby.

In this condition God doth not appeare in his owne shape to the soul, but in the shape of an enemy; and when God seemes against us, who shall stand for us? Our blessed Saviour in his agony had the Angels to comfort him; but had he beene a meere man, and not assisted by the Godhead, it was not the comfort (no not) of Angels that could have upheld him, in the sense of his fathers withdrawing his countenance from him. Alas then what will become of us in such a case if we be not supported by a spirit of power, and the power of an almighty spirit?

World, and hell it selfe were mustered A22 together.

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CHAP. XXI.

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If all the temptations of the whole world, and hell it selfe were mustered A22 together.

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together, they were nothing to this, whereby the great God sets himselfe contrary to his poore creature. None can conceive so, but those that have felt it. If the hiding of his face will so trouble the foule, what will his frowne and angry look doe? Needs must the foule bee in a wofull plight, when as God feemes not onely to bee absent from it, but an enemy to it. When a man sees no comfort from above, and lookes inward and sees lesse, when hee lookes about him, and fees nothing but evidences of Gods displeasure; beneath him, and fees nothing but desperation, clouds without, and clouds within, nothing but clouds in his condition here, he had need of faith to breake through all, and see Sunne through the thickest cloud.

Tentatio blasphemiarum. Upon this, the distressed soule is in danger to be set upon by a temptation, called the temptation of blasphemy, that is, to entertain bitter thoughts against God, and especially against the grace and goodnesse of God, wherein he desires to make himselfe most knowned

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to his creature. In those that have wilfully refifted divine truths made knowne unto them, and after taste, despised them, a perswasion that God hath forfaken them, fet on strongly by Sathan, hath a worse effect, it stirs up a hellish harred against God, carying them to a revengefull defire of oppofing what soever is Gods, though not alwayes openly (for then they should lose the advantage of doing hurt,) yer fecretly and fubrilly, and under pretence of the contrary. To this degree of blashbemie Gods children never fall, yet they may feele the venome of corruption stirring in their hearts, against God and his wayes which he takes with them; and this addes greatly to the depth of their affliction, when afterward they think with themselves what hellish stuffe they cary in their soules. This is not fo much discerned in the temptation, but after the fit is somewhat remitted.

In this kinde of desertion, seconded with this kinde of temptation, the way is to call home the soule, and to check

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Jon.2.4.

it, and charge it to trust in God, even though he shewes himselfe an enemy, for it is but a sheme, he doth but put on a maske with a purpose to reveale himselfe the more graciously afterward; his maner is to worke by contraries. In this condition God lets-in some few beames of light, whereby the foul casts a longing looke upon God, even when he seemes to forsake it; it will with Ionas in the belly of hell, looke back to the holy Temple of God, it will steale a looke unto Christ. Nothing more confortable in this condition, then to flye to him, that by experience knew what this kinde of for faking meant, for this very end that he might bee the fitter to succour us in the like distresse.

Ifay 50.10

Learne therefore to appeale from God to God, oppose his gracious nature, his sweet promises to such as an in darknesse, and see no light, inviting them to trust in him, though there appeare to the eye of sense and reason nothing but darknesse: Here make used that sweet Relation of God in Christ, becomming a Father to us: Doubtlesse thou

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thou art our Father: flesh would make a doubt of it, and thou seemest to hide thy face from us, yet doubtleffe thou art our Father, and hast in former time shewed thy selfe to be so, wee will not leave thee till we have a bleffing from thee, till we have a kinder looke from thee: This wrastling will prevaile at length, and we shall have such a fight of him, as shall bee an encouragement for the time to come, when we shall be able to comfort others, with those comforts whereby we have been refreshed our selves. With the Saints case remember the Saints course, which is to trust in God. So Christ the Head of the Church com mits himselfe to that God, whose favour for the present he felt not; So lob resolves upon trust though God should kill him.

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But these hely persons were not troubled Object. with the guilt of any particular sin, but I feele the just displeasure of God kindled against me for many and great offences.

True it is, that sinne is not so sweet Answ. in the committing, as it is heavy and bitter in the reckoning. When Adam

Aa4 had Cap. 21. Ela. 63.16

2 Cor.1.4.

There is not the stoutest man breathing, but if God set's his conscience against him, it will pull him downe, and lay him stat, and fill him with such inward terrors, as he shall be more afraid of himselfe, then of all the world be side. This were a dolefull case, if God had not provided in Christ a remedy for this great evill of evills, and if the holy Spirit were not above the conscience, able as well to pacific it by the sense of Gods love in Christ, as to convince it of sinne, and the just desert thereby.

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But my sinnes are not the sinnes of an ordinary man, my spots are not as the spots of the rest of Gods children.

Conceive of Gods mercy as no ordinary mercy, and Christs obedience as no ordinary obedience. There is some thing in the very greatnesse of sin, that may encourage us to goe to God, for the greater our sinnes are, the greater the glory of his powerfull mercy in pardoning, and his powerfull grace in healing will appeare. The great God delights to shew his greatnesse in the greatest

Cap. 21.

Object.

Anfw.

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Mic. 7.18.

greatest things; Even men glory, when they are put upon that, which may set forth their worth in any kinde. God delighteth in mercy, it pleaseth him (nothing so well) as being his chiefe Name, which then we take in vaine, when we are not moved by it to come unto him.

That which Sathan would use as an argument to drive us from God, wee should use as a strong plea with him. Lord the greater my sins are, the greater will be the glory of thy pardoning mercy. David after his hainous sinnes, cries not for mercy, but for abundance of mercy, according to the multitude of thy mercies, doe away mine offences: his mercy is not only above his own works, but above ours too. If we could sin more then he could pardon, then wee might have some reason to despaire. Despaire is a high point of Atheisme, it takes away God and Christ both at once. Iudan

Pfal.51.

When therefore Conscience joyning with

in betraying our Saviour, was an occafion of his death as man, but in despairing he did what lay in him to take a-

way his life as God.

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with Sathan, sets out thy sinne in its colours, labour thou by faith to fet out God in his colours, infinite in mercy and loving kindnesse. Here lies the art of a Christian; It is divine Rhetorick thus to perswade and set downe the soule. Thy finnes are great, but Adams was greater, who being so newly advanced above all the creatures, and taken into so neare an acquaintance with God, and having ability to perfift in that condition if he would, yet willingly overthrew himselfe and all his whole posterity, by yeelding to a temptation, which though high (as being promised to bee like unto God,) yet such as hee should and might have resisted; No finne we can commit, can be a finne of so tainting and spreading a nature, yet as he fell by distrust, so he was recovered by trusting, and so must we by relying on a second Adam, whose obedience and righteousnesse from thence Rom.5.17 raignes, to the taking away not only of that one sinne of Adam, and ours in him, but of all, and not onely to the pardon of all sinne, but to a right of everlasting

Cap. 21.

Cap. 21. Gods mercy not to be limited.

Isay 55.8.

lasting life. The Lord thinkes himself disparaged, when wee have no higher thoughts of his mercy, then of our fins, when we bring God downe to our Mo del, when as, the heavens are not so much higher then the earth, then his thoughts of love and goodnesse, are above the thoughts of our unworthinesse. It is a kinde of taking away the Almighty, to limit his boundlesse mercy in Christ, within the narrow scantling of our apprehension; yet infidelity doth this, which should stirre up in us a loathing of it above all other sinnes. But this is Sachans fetch, when once he hath brought us into fins against the Law, then to bring us into sinnes of a higher nature, and deeper danger, even against the blessed Gospell, that so there may be no remedy, but that mercy it selfe might condemne us.

All the aggravations, that conscience and Sathan helping it, are able to raise sinne unto, cannot rise to that degree of infinitenesse, that Gods mercy in Christ is of. If there be a spring of sin in us, there is a spring of mercy in him, and a fountaine opened daily to wash

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our selves in. If we sin oft, let us do as S. Paul, who prayed oft against the prick of the flesh. If it be a devill of long continuance, yet fasting and prayer will drive him out at length.

Nothing keepes the foule more downe, then finnes of long continuance, because corruption of nature hath gotten such strength in them, as nature is added to nature, and custome doth so determine and fway the foule one way, that men thinke it impossible to recover themselves, they see one linke of fin draw on another, all making a chain to fasten them to destruction, they thinke of necessity they must be damned because custome hath bred a necesfity of finning in them, and conceive of the promise of mercy, as only made to such as turn from their sinfull courses, in which they see themselves so hardened, that they cannot repent.

Certaine it is, the condition is most lamentable, that yeelding unto sinne brings men unto. Men are carefull to prevent dangerous sicknesses of body, and the danger of law concerning their

states;

Cap. 21. Zac. 13.1.

Ifay 55.8. Sinnes of continuance dangerous. Cap. 21.

estates; but seldome consider into what a miserable plight their sinnes which they so willingly give themselves up unto, will bring them in. If they doe not perish in their sins, yet their yeelding will bring them into such a doleful condition, that they would give the whole world, if they were possessour of it, to have their spirits at freedome from this bondage and feare.

To such as blesse themselves in an ill way upon hope of mercy, we dare not speake a word of comfort, because God doth not, but threatens his wrath, shall burne to hell against them. Yet because while life continues there may be as a space, so a place, and grace for repentance, these must be dealt with all in such a maner, as they may be stayed and stopped in their dangerous courses, there must be a stop before a turne.

And when their consciences are throughly awaked with sense of their danger, let them seriously consider whither sin, and Sathan by sin is carying of them, and lay to heart the justice of God, standing before them as an Ale

How to deale with fuch, as have lived long in finne.

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gell with a drawne sword, ready to fall Cap. 21. upon them if they post on still.

Yet to keep them from utter finking, let them confider withall, the unlimitedmercy of God, as not limited to any person, or any sin, so not to any time; there is no prescription of time can binde God, his mercy hath no certaine date that will expire, so as those that fly unto it, shall have no benefit. Invincible mercy will never be conquered, and endlesse goodnesse never admits of bounds or end.

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What kinde of people were those that followed Christ, were they not such as had lived long in their sinfull courses ? He did not onely raise them that were newly dead, but LaZarus that had Iyen foure dayes in the grave. They thought Christs power in raising the dead, had reached to a short time onely, but hee would let them know, that hee could as well raise those that had been long as lately dead. If Christ be the Physitian, it is no matter of how long continuance the disease be. He is good at all kinde of diseases, and will not

Bonitas invicti non vincitur & infinita mi-Serecurdia non finitur: Fulgent.

Cap. 21.

not endure the reproach of disability to cure any. Some diseases are the reproaches of other Physitians, as being above their skill to helpe, but no conceit more dangerous when we are to deale with Christ.

"The bleffed Martyr Bilney was " much offended when he heard an elo-"quent Preacher enveighing against "fin, faying thus. Behold, thou hast " lyen rotten in thy owne lusts, by the "space of sixty yeares, even as a beast " in his owne dung, and wilt thou pre-" fume in one year to goe forward to-" wards heaven, and that in thine olde "age, as much as thou wentest back. " ward from heaven to hell in fixty " yeares? Is not this a goodly argu-"ment (saith Bilney?) Is this preach-"ing of repentance in the name of Je-

"sus? It is as if Christ had dyed in

"vaine for such a man, and that hee "must make satisfaction for himselfe.

"If I had heard (faith he) fuch preach-"ing of repentance in times past, I had

" utterly despaired of mercy: We must never thinke the doore of hope to bee

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that against us, if we have a purpose to turne unto God. As there is nothing more injurious to Christ, so nothing more foolish and groundlesse then to distrust, it being the chiefe scope of God in his word to draw our trust to him in Christ, in whom is alwayes open a breast of mercy for humbled sinners to slye unto.

But thus farre the consideration of our long time spent in the devils fervice should prevaile with us, as to take more shame to our selves, so to resolve more strongly for God and his wayes, and to account it more then sufficient that wee have spent already, so much precious time to so ill purposes, and the lesse time we have, to make the more haft, to worke for God, and bring all the honour wee can to Religion in so little a space. Oh how doth it grieve those that have felt the gracious power of Christ in converting their soules, that ever they should spend the stregth of their parts in the worke of his and their enemie. And might they live longer, it is their full purpose for ever to

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renounce their former wayes. There is bred in them an eternall desire of pleasing God, as in the wicked there is an eternall desire of offending him, which eternity of desires God lookes to in both of them, and rewards them accordingly, though hee cuts off the thred of their lives.

But God in wisdome will have the conversions of such as have gone on in a course of sinning (especially after light revealed) to be rare and difficult Birthes in those that are ancienter, are with greater danger then in the younger fort. God will take a course, that his grace shall not be turned into wantonnesse. He oft holds such upon the rack of a troubled conscience, that they and others may feare to buy the pleasure of finne at such a rate. Indeed where simm abounds, there grace superabounds, but then it is where sinne that abounded in the life, abounds in the conscience in griefe and detestation of it, as the greatest evill. Christ groaned at the raising of Lazarus, which he did not at others because that though to an Almighty power

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Cavendum est vulums, quod dolore curatur.

power all things are alike easie, yet hee Cap. 21. will shew that there be degrees of difficulties in the things themselves, and make it appeare to us that it is fo. Therefore those that have enjoyed long the fweet of finne, may expect the bitterest sorrow and repentance for finne.

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Yet never give place to thoughts of despaire, as comming from him that would overturne the end of the Gospell, which layes open the riches of Gods mercy in Christ, which riches none fet out more then those that have beene the greatest of sinners, as we see in Paul. We cannot exalt God more then by taking notice, and making use of that great designe of infinite wisdome in reconciling justice and mercy together, so as now he is not only mercifull, but just in pardoning sinnes. Our Saviour as he came towards the latter age of the world, when all things seemed desperate, so hee comes to some men in the latter part of their dayes. The mercy shewed to Zacheus, and the good theefe was personall, but the comfort intended Bb2

Rom. 3.26.

ed by Christ was publike, therefore

fill fill truft in God.

In this case wee must goe to God, with whom all things are possible, to put forth his Almighty power, noton. ly in the pardoning, but in subduing our iniquities. He that can make a Camell goe through a needles eye, can make a high conceited man lowly, a rich man humble. Therefore never question his power, much leffe his willingneffe, when he is not onely ready to receive us when we returne, but perswades and intreates us to come in unto him, yea after back-fliding and false dealing with him, wherein he allowes no mercy to be shewed by man, yet he will take liberty to shew mercy himselfe.

Icr.3.2.

But I have often relapsed and fallen into

the same sin againe and againe.

If Christ will have us pardon our brother seaventy seaven times, can wee thinke that hee will enjoyne us more, then he will be ready to doe himselfe, when in case of shewing mercy hee would have us thinke his thoughts to be farre above ours. Adam lost all by

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once finning, but we are under a better covenant, a covenant of mercy, and are encouraged by the Sonne to goe to the Father every day for the sinnes of that day.

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Where the worke of grace is begun, fin loses strength by every new fall; for hence issues deeper humility, stronger hatred, fresh indignation against our selves, more experience of the deceitfulnesse of our hearts, renewed resolutions untill fin be brought under. That should not drive us from God, which God would have us make use of, to flye the rather to him, fince there is a throne of grace set up in Jesus Christ, we may boldly make use of, and let us be ashamed to sinne, and not ashamed to glorifie Gods mercy in begging pardon for fin. Nothing will make us more ashamed to sin, then thoughts of so free and large mercy. It will grieve an ingenuous spirit to offend so good a God. Ah that there should be such an heart in me, as to tire the patience of God, and damme up his goodnesse, as much as in me lyes; but this is our com-Bb3 fort,

Cap. 21.

fort, that the plea of mercy from a broken spirit to a gracious Father, will ever hold good. When wee are at the lowest in this world, yet there are these three grounds of comfort still remaining. 1. That wee are not yet in the place of the damned, whose estate is unalterable. 2. That whilest we live, there is time and space for recovering of our selves. 3. That there is grace of fered, if we will not shut our hearts against it.

Object.

Anlw.

O, but every one hath his time, my good boure may be past.

That is counsell to thee, it is not pass
if thou canst raise up thy heart to God,
and embrace his goodnesse. Shew by
thy yeelding unto mercy, that thy
time of mercy is not yet out, rather
then by concluding uncomfortably,
willingly betray thy selfe to thy greatest enemy, enforcing that upon thy
selfe, which God labours to draw thee
from. As in the sinne against the Holy
Ghost, feare shewes that wee have not
committed it: So in this, a tender
heart fearing least our time bee past,
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Cap. 22.

CHAP. XXII.

Of sorow for sin, and hatred of sinne, when right and sufficient. Helps thereto.

Object.

AH, there's my misery. If I could be humbled for sinne, I might hope for mercy, but I never yet knew what a broken heart meant, this soule of mine was never as yet sensible of the griefe and smart of sinne, how then can I expect any comfort?

Answ.

It is one of Sathans policies, to hold us in a dead and barren condition, by following us with conceits, that we have not forowed in proportion to our offences. True it is, we should labour that our forow might in some measure answer to the haynous nesse of our sinst but we must know sorrow is not requi-

red for it selfe in that degree as faith is;

If we could trust in God without much forow for our sins, then it would not be required, for God delights not in our sorow as sorow, God in mercy both re-

Sorow not required for it felfe: as forow.

quires it and workes it, as thereby making us capable vessels of mercy, fix to acknowledge, value, and walke worthy

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of Christ; he requres it as it is a means to imbitter fin, and the delightfull pleasures thereof unto us, and by that meanes bring us to a right judgement of our felves, and the creature, with which finne commits spirituall adultery, that so we may recover our taste before loft. And then, when with the Prodigall wee returne unto our selves (having lost our felves before) we are fit to judge of the basenesse of sin, and of the worth of mercy; and so upon grounds of right reason, bee willing to alter our condition, and embrace mercy upon any tearmes it shall please Christ to injoyne.

Secondly, if we could grieve and cast downe our selves beneath the earth, as low as the nethermost pir, yet this would be no satisfaction to God for sin; of it selfe, it is rather an enterance, and beginning of hell.

Thirdly, we must search what is the cause of this want of griefe which wee complaine of; whether it be not a secret cleaving to the creature, and too such contentment in it, which oft sealeath

Cap. 22.

Anf.2.
The greatest forow can make no satisfaction for sinne.

Ans.3.

Vie of crosses.

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Cap. 22.

Caules of

our want

of griefe

for tinne.

I. Want of

confidera-

tion.

Want of a divine worke.

rously set upon, and to fixe our running spirits. For though griefe for crosses kinder spirituall griefe, yet worldly delights hinder more. That griefe is lesse distant from true griefe, and therfore neerer to be turned into it.

And put case wee could call off our mindes from other things, and set them on griefe for our sinnes, yet it is onely Gods spirit that can worke our

hearts to this griefe, and for this ende

perhaps

thing. One maine use of crosses, is to

take off the foule from that it is dange-

Cap. 22.

perhaps God holds us off from it, to teach us, that he is the teacher of the heart to grieve. And thereupon it is our duty to waite, till hee reveale our selves so far to our selves, as to stirup this affection in us.

Another cause may bee a kinde of doublenesse of heart, whereby wee would bring two things together that cannot suite. We would grieve for fin fo far as we thinke it an evidence of a good condition: but then, because it is an irksome taske, and because it cannot be wrought without severing our heart from those sweet delights it is set upon: hence we are loath God should take that course to worke griese, which croffeth our disposition. The soule must therefore by selfe-deniall be brought to such a degree of fincerity and fimplicity, as to be willing to give God leave to worke this forew, not to bee forrowed for, by what way hee himselfe pleaseth. But here we must remember againe, that this selfe-deniall, is not of our selves, but of God, who onely can take us out of our felves, and if our hearts .

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3. A kinde of doublenes of heart.

Selfe-deniall.

2 Cor. 7.

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hearts were brought to a stooping herein to his worke, it would stop many a crosse, and continue many a blessing which God is forced to take from us, that he may worke that griefe in us, which he seeth would not otherwise be kindly wrought.

4.

God giveth some larger spirits, and so their sorowes become larger. Some upon quicknesse of apprehension, and the ready passages betwixt the braine and the heart, are quickly moved: where the apprehension is deeper, and the passages slower, there sorow is long in working, and long in removing. The deepest waters have the stillest motion. Iron takes fire more slowly then stubble, but then it holds it longer.

Because God sees not griefe so fit for one dispofition as another. Againe, Godthat searcheth and knows our hearts (better then our selves)knows when and in what measure it is fit for to grieve: He sees it fitter for some dispositions, to goe on in a constant griefe. We must give that honour to the wisdome of the great Physician of soules, to know best how to mingle and minister his potions. And we must not bee

founkinde to take it ill at Gods hands, when he, (out of gentlenesse and forbearance) ministers not to us that churlish Physick hee doth to others; but cheerefully embrace any potion that he thinkes sit to give us.

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Some holy men have defired to see their sinne in the most ugly colours, and God hath heard them in their requests. But yet his hand was so heavy upon them, that they went alwayes mourning to their very graves; and thought it fitter to leave it to Gods wisdome to mingle the potion of forrow, then to be their own choosers. For a conclusion then of this point, If wee grieve that we cannot grieve, and so far as it is sinne, make it our griefe: then put it amongst the rest of our sinnes, which we beg pardon of, and helpe against, and let it not hinder us from going to Christ, but drive us to him. For, herein lyes the danger of this temptation, that those who complaine in this kinde, thinke it should be presumption to goe to Christ: when as he especially calleth the weary and heavy laden sinner

Cap. 22.

Earnest defire of too much forovy for tin dangerous.

Mr.Leaver.

Cap. 22.

to come unto him, and therefore such as are sensible that they are not sensible enough of their sin, must know, though want of feeling be quite opposite to the life of Grace: yet sensiblenes of the want of feeling, shows some degree of the life of Grace. The safest way in this case is, from that life and light that God hath wrought in our soules, to see and feele this want of feeling, to cast our selves and this our indisposition, upon the pardoning and healing mercy of God in Christ.

Caution

We speake onely of those that are so farre displeased with themselves for their ill temper, as they doe not favour themselves in it, but are willing to yeeld to Gods way in redressing it, and doe not crosse the Spirit, moving them thus with David to check themselves, and to trust in God. Otherwise, an unfeeling and carelesse state of Spirit will breed a secret shame of going to God, for removing of that wee are not hearty in labouring against, so farre as our conscience tells us we are enabled.

The most constant state of the soule, in regard of sinne.

The most constant state the soule can bee in, in regard of sin, is, upon judgement

judgement to condemne it upon right grounds, and to resolve against it.

Whereupon Repentance is called an after wisdome and change of the minde. And this disposition is in Gods children at alltimes. And for affections, love of that which is good, and hatred of that which is evill: these likewise, have a setled continuance in the soule. But, griefe and forow rise and fall as fresh occasions are offered, and are more lively stirred up upon some lively representation, to the soule of some hurt wee receive by finne, and wrong wee doe to God in it. The reason hereof is, because till the foule be separated from the body, these affections have more communion with the body, and therefore they cary more outward expressions, then dislike, or abomination in the minde doth. We are to judge of our selves more by that which is constant, then by that which is ebbing and flowing.

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But, what is the reason that the affectiens doe not alwayes follow the judgement, and the choise or refusall of the will?

Our soule being a finite substance, is caried

2. Sometimes when God calleth to griefe, and the judgement and will goeth along with God, Yet the heart is not alwayes ready, because (it may bee) it hath runne out so farre, that it cannot presently be called in againe.

4. Or, the fpirits (which are the instruments of the soule) may be so wasted, that they cannot hold out to feed a strong griefe: in which case, the conscience must rest in our setled judgement and hatred of ill; which is the furest and never-failing Character of a good foule.

5. Oft times God in mercy takes us off from griefe and sorow, by refreshing occasions: because sorow and griefe are affections very much afflicting both of body and foule.

When is godly sorrow in that degree wherein the soule may stay it selfe from uncomfortable thoughts about its condition? When

failing character ofagood soule.

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which formerly we fell into, and ability to walke in a contrary way: for this answers Gods end in griefe, one of which, is a prevention from falling for the time to come. For God hath that affection in him which hee puts into Parents, which is by smart to prevent their childrens boldnesse of offending for the time to come.

2. When that which is wanting in griefe, is made up in feare. Here there is no great cause of complaint of the want of griese, for this holy affection is the awband of the soule, whereby it is kept from starting from God and his

wayes.

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3. When after griefe wee finde inward peace; for true griefe being Gods worke in us, hee knowes best how to measure it. Therefore, what soever same God brings my soule into, I am to rest in his goodnesse, and not except against his dealing. That peace and joy, which riseth from griefe in the tise of meanes, and makes the soule more humble and thankfull to God, and lesse

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Cap. 21.

Ans.1.

When the foule is fufficiently humbled.

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How to know that we hate fin rightly.

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lishing of it, for hatred is an implacable, and irreconcileable affection. True batred is caried against the

whole kinde of fin, without respect of any wrong done to us, but only out of

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Cap. 22.

lingly in us. As in the affection of love, many thinke that they have no love to Godat all: yet let God be dishonoured in his name, truth, or children, and their love will soone stirre and appeare in just anger.

What wee must doe in want of griefe for finne.

I.

2.

In want of griefe for sinne, we must remember, 1. That wee must have this affection from God, before we can bring it unto God.

And therefore, in the second place, Our chiefe care should be, not to harden our hearts against the motions of the spirit, stirring us to seasonable griefe, for that may cause a judicial hardnesse from God. God oft inflicteth some spirituall judgement (as a correction upon men) for not yeelding to his spirit at the first, they feele a hardnesse of heart growing upon them: This made the Church complaine, Why bast thou hardened our hearts from thy feare? which if Christians did well confider, they would more carefully entertaine such impressions of sorow, as the spirit in the use of the meanes, and ob. servation of Gods dealing towards themselves

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themselves or others, shall worke in them, then they doe. It is a saying of Austen, Let a man grieve for his sinne, and joy for his griefe. Though wee can neither love, nor grieve, nor joy of our selves, as we should, yet our hearts tell us, wee are often guilty of giving a check to the spirit, stirring these affections in us, which is a maine cause of the many sharp afflictions wee endure in this life, though Gods love in the main matter of salvation be most firme unto us.

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We must not thinke to have all this griese at sirst, & at once, for oftentimes it is deeper after a sight and seeling of Gods love then it was before. God is a free Agent, and knowes every mans severall mould, and the severall services he is to use them in, and oft takes liberty afterwards to humble men more (when he hath inabled them better to be are it) then in their first entrance into Religion: Griese before springs commonly from selfe-love, and seare of danger. Let no man suspect his estate because God spares him in the begin-

Cc3

Ala Chriftians grief is not at first.

ning.

Cap. 22.

ning. For Christians many times meete with greater trials after their conversion then ever they thought on. When men take little fines, they means to take the greater rent. God will have his children first or last to feele what sin is and how much they are beholding to him for Christ.

Griefe arifes not alwayes fró our poring on finne. This griefe doth not alwayes arife from poring on sinne, but by oft considering of the infinite goodnesse of God in Christ, and thereby reflecting on our owne unworthinesse, not onely in regard of sinne past, but likewise of the sin that hangeth upon us, and issues daily from us. The more holy a man is, the more hee sees the holinesse of Gods nature, with whom he desires to have communion, the more he is grieved that there should be any thing sound in him, displeasing to so pure a Majestie.

And as all our griefe comes not at first, so God will not have it come all at once, but to be a streame alwayes running, fed with a spring, yet within the bankes, though sometimes deeper, sometimes shallower. Griefe for sinne

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is like a constant streame; griefe for Cap. 22. other things is like a torrent, or fwelling waters, which are foone up, foone downe, what it wants in greatnesse, is made up in continuance.

Againe, If wee watch not our nature, there will be a spice of Popery, (which is a naturall Religion) in this great defire of more griefe: as if we had that, then we had something to satisfie God withall, and so, our mindes will run too much upon workes. This griefe must not onely bee wrought by God revealing our finne, and his mercy unto us in Christ: But when it is wrought, wee must altogether rest (in a sense of our owne emptinesse) upon the full satisfa. dion and worthinesse of Christ our Sa-VIOLIT.

All this that hath beene faid, rends not to the abating of our defire to have a tender and bleeding heart for finne: but that in the pursuit of this defire, we be not cast downe so as to question our estates, if we feele not that measure of griefe which we defire and endeavour after: Or, to refuse our portion of joy

Cc4

That there maybe a spice of Popery in this our earnest defire of much griefe.

The scope of this discourse of griefe.

Cap. 23.

Mat.5.

which God offers us in Christ. Considering, griefe is no further good, then it makes way for joy: which caused our Saviour to joyne them together: Blessed are the mourners, for they shall bee comforted. Being thus disposed, wee may commit our souls to God in peace, notwithstanding Satans troubling of us in the houre of temptation.

CHAP. XXIII.

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Other spiritual causes of the soules trouble, discovered, and removed: and objections answered.

That the great conflict in us betwixt grace and corruption doth also much cast us downe. Proximorum odia sunt acerbissima.

A Nother thing that disquiets and casts downe the soule very much, is, that inward conflict betwixt grace and corruption: this makes us most worke, and puts us to most disquietment. It is the trouble of troubles to have two inhabitants so neare in one soule, and these to strive one against another, in every action, and at all times in every part and power in us: the one carying us upward, higher and higher

higher still, till we come to God: the Cap. 23. other, pulling us lower and lower, further from him. This cannot but breed a ereat disquiet, when a Christian shall bee out on to that which he would not, and himdered from that which bee would doe, or troubled in the performance of it. The more light there is to discerne, and life of Orace to be sensible hereof; and the more love of Christ, and desire from love to be like to him, the more irkesome will this be: no wonder then that the Apostle cryedout, o wretched man Rom.7. that I am. erc.

Here is a speciall use of Trust, in the free mercy of God in justification, (considering all is stained that comes from us) it is one maine end of Gods leaving us in this conflicting condition, that we may live and die by faith in the persectrighteousnesse of Christ, whereby we glorifie God more, then if wee had perfect righteousnesse of our owne. Hereby likewise, wee are driven to make use of all the promises of Grace, and to trust in God for the performance of them, in strengthening his

Rom.7.

That the fight and fenfe of this sharpe conflict, (bould cause us to trust the more in God.

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Cap. 23.

owne party in us, and not only to trust in God for particular graces, but for his Spirit which is the spring of all graces, which we have through and from Christ: who will helpe us in this fight, until hee hath made us like himselfe. We are under the government of Grace, sinne is deposed from the rule it had, and shall never recover the right it had againe; It is lest in us for matter of exercise, and ground of triumph.

Object.
Of perseverance to
the end,
answered.

Ob (say some) I shall never hold out, as good give over at first as at last, I finde such strong inclinations to sinne in me, and such weaknesse to resist temptation, that I feare I shall but shame the cause; I shall one day perish by the hand of Satan, strengthening my corruption.

Answ.

Why art thou thus troubled? Trust in God, Grace will be above Nature, God above the devill, the Spirit above the flesh. Be strong in the Lord, the battell is his, and the victory ours before hand. If wee fought in our owne cause and strength, and with our weapons, it were something: but as wee fight in the power of God, so are weekept

hept by that mighty power through faith umo salvation. It lyes upon the faithfulnesse of Christ, to put us into that posfession of glory which he hath purchafed for us: therefore charge the foule make use of the promises, and rely upon God for perfecting the good worke that he hath begun in thee.

Corruptions be strong, but stronger ishe that is in us, then that corruption that is in us. When wee are weake in our owne sense, then are we strong in him, who perfecteth strength in our weaknesse felt and acknowledged. Our corruptions are Gods enemies as well as ours, and therefore in trusting to him, and fighting against them, wee may bee fure hee will take our part against them.

But I have great impediments, and ma- Object. my discouragements in my Christian course.

What if our impediments be Mountaines, faith is able to remove them; Who atthou o Mountaine (faith the Propher.) What a world of impediments were there betwixt Egypt and the land of Canaan, betwixe the returne out of Babylon

Cap. 23. Pet. 2.

Cap. 23.

Pfal.95.

Babylon and lerasalem, yet faith removed all, by looking to Gods power and truth in his promise. The looking too much to the Anakims and Grants, and too little to Gods omnipotency, shut the Israelites out of Canaan, and put God to his oath, that they should never enter into bis rest, and it will exclude our foules from happinesse at length, if looking too much upon these Anakims within us and without us, wee basely despaire and give over the field, considering all our enemies are not onely conquered for us by our Head, but shall be conquered in us, so that in strength of affistance we fight against them, God gave the Israelites enemies into their hands, but yet they must fight it out, and what coward will not fight when he is fure of help and victory.

Object.

But I cary continually about mee a corrupt heart, If that were once changed, I could have some comfort. 60

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Answ.

A new heart is Gods creature, and hee hath promised to create it in us. A creating power cannot only bring somthing out of nothing, but contrary out of

of contrary. Where we are fure of Gods | Cap. 23. truth, let us never question that power to which all things are possible. If our hearts were as ill, as God is powerfull and good, there were some ground of discouragement. In what measure we give up our hearts to God, in that meafure wee are fure to receive them better. That Grace which inlargeth the heart to defire good, is therefore given, that God may encrease it, being both a part and a pledge of further grace. There is a promise of powring cleane water upon us, which faith must sue out. Christ hath taken upo him to purge his Spoule, and make her fit for himselfe.

But I have many wants and defects to Object.

be supplyed.

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It pleaseth him, that in Christ all ful- answ. nesse shall dwell, from whose fulnesse grace sufficient is dispensed to us, answerable to the measure of our faith, whereby we fetch it from the fountain. The more we trast, the more we have. When we looke therefore to our owne want, we should look withall to Christs falmess, and his neernesse to us, and take

Ephcl.s.

Cap. 23.

take advantage from our mifery, to rest upon his al sufficiencie, whose fulnesseis ours, as himselfe is. Our fulnesse with our life is hid in Christ, and distilled into us, in such measure as his wisdome thinketh fit, and as sheweth him to bee a free agent, and yet to as the blame for want of grace lyeth upon us, feeing he is before hand with us in his offers of grace, and our owne consciences will tell us, that our failings are more from cherishing of some lust, then from unwillingnesse in him to supply us with grace.

But God is of pure eyes, and cannot en. dure such sinfull services as I performe.

Though God be of pure eyes, yet he looks upon us in him, who is blame leffe and without spot, who by vertue of his fweet finelling facrifice, appeares for us in heaven, and mingles his odors with our fervices, and in him will God be known to us by the name of a kinde Father, not onely in pardoning our defects, but accepting our endeavours. Wee offer our services to God, nor in our ownename, but in the name of our

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high Prieft, who takes them from us, & Cap. 24. melents them to his Father, as stirred up by his spirit, and persumed by his obedience. Ionas his prayer was mingled with a great deale of passion and imperfection, yet God could discerne something of his owne in it, and pitty and pardon the rest.

ode is a amy finch or operation of the contraction CHAP. XXIV.

Of outward troubles difquieting the firit: and comforts in them.

A S for the outward evills that we meet withall in this life; they are either such, I. As deprive us of the comforts our nature is supported withall; or elfe, 2. they bring such misery upon our nature or condition that hinders our well-being in this world.

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nr b For the first, Trust in God, and take out of his al- fufficiency what foever we want. Sure we are by his promise, that wee shall want nothing that is good? What he takes away one way, hee can give another; what he takes away in Amaziab.

For outward evils.

one

one hand, he can give in another, what he with-holds one way, he can supply in a better. Whatsoever comfort wee have in goods, friends, health, or any other blessings, it is all conveyed by him, who still remaines though these be taken from us. And wee have him bound in many promises for all that is needfull for us. We may sue him upon his owne bond; can we thinke that he who will give us a Kingdome, will fail us in necessary provision to bring us thither, who himselfe is our portion?

For the miseries of this life, of our nature and condition.

As for those miseries which our weake nature is subject to, they are all under Christ, they come and goe at his command, they are his messengers sent for our good, and called back again when they have done what they came for. Therefore lookenors much upon them, as to him for strength and comfort in them, mitigation of them, and grace to prosit by them.

To strengthen our faith the more in God, he calleth himselfe, a Buckler for defence from ill, and an exceeding great reward for a supply of all good. A sunne

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for the one, and a shield for the other. Trust him then with health, wealth, good name, all that thou hast. It is not in man to take away that from us which God will give us, and keepe for us. It is not in mans power to make others conceive what they please of us.

Among croffes, this is that which disquieteth not the minde least, to bee deceived in matter of trust, when as if we had not trusted, wee had not beene deceived. The very feare of being difappointed, made David in his hast thinke all men were lyars. But as it is a sharpe crosse, so nothing will drive us nearer unto God, who never faileth his.

Friends often prove as the reed of E- lob 6.15. gypt, as a broken staffe, and as a deceitfull Brooke, that failes the weary passenger in Summer time, when there is most need of refreshing; and it is the unhappinesse of men otherwise happy in the world, that during their prosperous condition, they know not who be their friends, for when their condition declines, it plainly appeares, that many were friends of their estates, and not of

Pfal.116:

their persons: But when men will know us least, God will know us most, he knowes our soules in adversity, and knowes them, so as to support and com. fort them, and that from the spring head of comfort, whereby the sweetest comforts are fetcht. What God conveyed before by friends, that he doth now instill immediately from himselfe. The immediate comforts are the strongest comforts. Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples, that they would leave him alone, yet (saith he) I am not alone, but the Father is with me. At S. Pauls first appealing, all for sooke him, but the Lord stood by him. Hee wants no company, that hath Christ for his companion. 1 looked for some to take pitty (faith David) but there was none. This unfaithfulnesse of man, is a foile to set out Gods truth, who is never neerer then when trouble is neerest. There is not so much asa shadow of change in him or his love.

cui Christus comes eft. Cypr.

Joh. 16.32.

Solus nonest

Tim.17.

Pl.69.120

It is just with God, when we lay too much weight of confidence upon any creature, to let us have the greater fall; Man may faile us, and yet bee a good man,

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man, but God cannot faile us and bee God, because he is truth it selfe. Shall God be so true to us, and shall not wee be true to him and his truth?

The like may be said in the departure of our friends. Our life is oft too much in the life of others, which God takes unkindly: How many friends have we in him alone? who rather then we shall want friends, can make our enemies our friends. A true believer isto Christ as his Mother, Brother, and sifter, because he caries that affection to them, as if they were Mother, Brother, and sifter to him indeed. As Christ makes us all to him, so should we make him all in all to our selves. If all comforts in the world were dead, we have them still in the living Lord.

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Sicknesses are harbingers of death, and in the apprehension of many they bee the greatest troubles, and tame great spirits, that nothing else could tame, herein wee are more to deale with God then with men, which is one comfort sicknesse yeeldeth above other troubles. It is better to bee troubled

Dd 2

Cap. 24.

Comfort in departure of friends.

Mat.12.50

Comfort in ficknes.

with

with the distempers of our owne bodies, then with the distempers of other mens soules; In which wee have not onely to deale with men, but with the devill himselfe, that ruleth in the humours of men.

Mcanes not to be relyed on.

The example of Asa teaches us in this case, not to lay too much trust upon the Physitian, but with Hezekiah first, looke up to God, and then use the meanes. If God will give us a quietus eft, and take us off from businesse by sicknesse, then we have a time of serving God by patient subjection to his will. If he meanes to use our service any further, hee will restore our health and strength to doe that worke he sets us about. Health is at his command, and ficknesse stayes at his rebuke. In the meane, the time of sicknesse is a time of purging from that defilement wee gathered in our health, till wee come purer out, which should move us the rather willingly to abide Gods time. Bleffed is that ficknesse that proves the health of the soule. Wee are best, for the most part, when wee are weakest.

Optimi sumus dum instrmi sumus.

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Then it appeares what good proficients we have been in time of health.

Cap. 24.

Carnall men are oft led along by falle hopes suggested by others, and cherished by themselves, that they shall livestill, and doe well, till death comes. and cuts off their vaine confidence, and their life both at once, before ever they are acquainted what it is to trust in God aright, in the use of meanes. Wee should labour to learne of S. Paul in desperate cases, to receive the sentence of death, and not to trust in our selves, but in God that raiseth the dead. Hee that raiseth our dead bodies out of the grave, can raise our diseased bodies out of the bed of ficknesse, if he hath a plea. fure to ferve himselfe by us.

2 Cor. 1.9.

In all kinde of troubles, it is not the ingredients that God puts into the Cup so much afflicts us, as the ingredients of our distempered passions mingled with them. The sting and coare of them all is sinne: when that is not onely pardoned, but in some measure healed, and the proud sless heaten out, then a healthy soule will beare any

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Sin the greatest trouble.

thing.

thing. Afterrepentance, that trouble that before was a correction, becomes now a triall and exercise of grace. Strike Lord (saith Luther) I beare any thing willingly, because my sinnes are forgiven. We should not be cast downe so much about outward troubles, as about sinne, that both procures them, and invenomes them. We see by experience, when conscience is once set at liberty, how chearefully men will goe underany burthen: therefore labour to keep out sinne, and then let come what will come.

Avoid not trouble by finne.

It is the foolish wisdome of the world to prevent trouble by sin, which is the way indeed to pull the greatest fouble upon us. For sinne dividing betwixt God and us, moveth him to leave the soule to intangle it selse in its owne wayes. When the conscience is cleare, then there is nothing between God and us to hinder our trust. Outward troubles rather drive us neerer unto God, and stand with his love. But sin desileth the soule, and sets it surther from God. It is well doing that inables

r Pet. 4.3.

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us to commit our foules cheerefully unto him. Whatsoever our outward condition be, if our hearts condemne us not, we may have boldne fe with God. In Iohn r. any trouble our care should be, not to avoid the trouble, but finfull miscari age in and about the trouble, and so trust God. It is a heavy condition to be under the burthen of trouble, and under the burthen of a guilty conscience both at once. When men will walke in the light of their owne fire, and the parkes which they have kindled themselves, it is just with God, that they should lye downe in forow.

Whatfoever injuries we fuffer from those that are ill affected to us, let us commit our cause to the God of vengeance, and not meddle with his prerogative. He will revenge our cause better then we can, and more perhaps then we defire. The wronged side, is the fafer side, * If in stead of meditating revenge, we can so overcome our selves, as to pray for our enemies, and deserve well of them, wee shall both sweeten our owne spirits, and prevent a sharpe

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Esay 50. ult

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^{*} Melior eft tristitia,ini. qua patientis, quani lætitia iniqua facientis. Aug.

Luk.23.34

Comfort in the houre of death.

temptation which wee are prone unto, and have an undoubted argument, that we are sonnes of that Father that doth good to his enemies, and members of that Saviour that prayed for his persecutors. And withall by heaping coales upon our enemies, shall melt them either to conversion, or to consusion.

But the greatest triall of trust, is in our last encounter with death, wherein we shall finde not only a deprivation of all comforts in this life, but a confluence of all ill at once, but wee must know, God will be the God of his unto death, and not only unto death, but in death. We may trust God the Father with our bodies and soules which he hath created; and God the Sonne, with the bodies and soules which he hath redeemed; and the holy Spirit, with those bodies and foules that he hath fanctified. We are not disquieted when weeput off our cloathes and goe to bed, because we trust Gods ordinary providence to raise us up againe. And why should we be disquieted when we put off our bodies, and sleep our last sleep, considering

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dering we are more fure to rise out of our graves, then out of our beds. Nay, we are raised up already in Christ our head: who is the resurrection and the life, in whom we may triumph over death, that triumpheth over the greatest Monarchs, as a disarmed and conquered enemie. Death is the death of it selfe. and not of us. If we would have faith ready to die by, wee must exercise it well in living by it, and then it will no more faile us, then the good things we lay hold on by it, untill it hath brought us into heaven, where that office of it is laid a fide: here is the prerogative of a true Christian above an hypocrite and a worldling, when as their trust, and the thing they trust in, failes them, then a true beleevers trust stands him in greatest stead.

In regard of our state after death, a Christian need not bee disquieted, for the Angels are ready to doe their office in carying his soule to Paradise, those Mansions prepared for him. His Saviour will bee his Judge, and the Head will not condemne the members: then hee

Cap. 24.

Ioh-11.25

Comfort from the state after death.

Iohn 14.2.

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Cap. 24.

is to receive the fruit and end of his Faith, the reward of his Hope; which is so great and so sure, that our trusting inGod for that Arengtheneth the heart to trust him for all other things in our passage; so that the refreshing of our faith in these great things, refreshes its dependance upon God for all things here below. And how strong helpes have we to uphold our Faith, in those great things which wee are not able to conceive of, till wee come to possesse them? Is not our husband there? and hath hee not taken possession for us? doth he not keep our place for us ? Is not our flesh there in him? and his spirit below with us? have we not some first fruits and earnest of it before hand? Is not Christ now a fitting and preparing of us daily, for what he hath prepared and keepes for us? Whither tends all we meete with in this world, that comes betwixt us and heaven, as desertions, inward conflicts, outward troubles, and death at last, but to fitus for a better condition hereafter, and by Faith therein, to stirre up a strong defire

desire after it? Comfort one another with these things, saith the Apostie? these bee the things will comfort the soule.

Cap. 25.
1 Thef.4.

CHAP. XXV.

of the defects of gifts, disquieting the soule. As also the afflictions of the Church.

A Mong other things, there is nothing more disquiets a Christian, that is called to the fellowship of Christ and his Church here, and to glory hereafter, then that he sees himselfe unfurnished, with those gifts that are sit for the calling of a Saint, As likewise for that particular standing and place wherein God hath set him in this world, by being a member of a body politick.

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For our Christian calling, wee must know that Christianity is a matter rather of grace then of gifts, of obedience then of parts. Gifts may come from a more common worke of the Spirit, they are common to castawayes,

Comfort in regard of our generall calling. Cap. 25.

Exod.7.11

and are more for others then for our selves. Grace comes from a peculiar fa. your of God, and especially for our owne good. In the same duty, where there is required both gifts and grace. (as in prayer) one may performe it with evidence of greater grace, then another of greater parts. Moses (a man not of the best speech) was chosen before Aaron, to speak to God, and to strive with him by Prayer, whilst Ifrael fought with Amaleck, with the sword It is a businesse more of the heart then of the tongue, more of groanes then of words, which groanes and fighes, the Spirit will alwayes stirre up even in the worst condition. Yet for parts there is no member, but it is fitted with some abilities, to doe servicein the body, and by faith may grow up to a greater measure. For God calls none to that high condition, but whom in some measure hee fits to bee an usefull member, and endues with a publique spirit.

Burthat is the measure which Christ thinkes fit; who will make up that in

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the body, which is wanting in any par- Cap. 25. ricular member. God will encrease the measure of our gifts, as occasion shall he offered to draw them forth: there is not the greatest, but may have use both of the parts, and graces of the meanest in the Church. And here the soule may by a spirit of faith goe to God in this maner. Lord, the estate of Christianity unto which thy love in Christ hath called, and advanced mee, is an high condition; and there is need of a great measure of grace, to uphold the credit and comfort of it. Whom thou callest unto it, thou dost in some measure furnish, to walke worthy of it. Let this be an evidece to my foul of the truth of thy call, that I am enabled by the Spirit for those duties that are required; in confidece of which affistace, I will set upo the work: Thou hast promised to give wis dome to the that askit, of to upbraid none with their unworthinese. Nay, then hast promised the spirit of all grace to those that begge it; it is that which I need, and it is no more then thou hast promised. Onely

Iam.r.s.

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 25. Caution

Onely it must bee remembred, that we doe not walke above our parts and graces, the iffue whereof will be dif. couragement in our selves, and disgrace from others.

The like may be faid for our particu-

lar calling, wherein we are to express

Directions for a comfortable usc of our particular calling. Gal.5. 13.

the graces of our Christian calling, and

Pares negotio.

ferve one another in love, as members of the State as well as of the Church, therefore every one must have r. a calling, 2. a lawfull, 3. a usefull calling, 4. a calling fitted for his parts, that he may be even for his businesse, 5. a lawfullentrance, and calling thereunto, 6. and a the lawfull demeanour in Though the Orbe and Sphere we walk inbe little, yet we must keepe within the bounds of it, because for our cariage in that, wee must give a strict account, and there is no calling so meane, but a man shall finde enough to gives good account for. Our care must be to know our worke, and then to doe it, and so to doe it, as if it were unto God, with conscience of moderate diligence; for over-doing, and overworking any thing,

thing, comes either from oftentation, or distrust in God: And negligence is so farre from getting any blessing, that it brings us under a curse for doing Gods worke negligently. For we must thinke our callings to be services of God who hath appointed us our standing therein.

Icr.48.10.

That which belongs to us in our calling, is care of discharging our duty, that which God takes upon him, is affistance and good successe in it. Let us doe our worke, and leave God to doe his owne. Diligence and trust in him is onely ours, the rest of the burthen is his. In a Family the Fathers and the Masters care is the greatest, the childs care is onely to obey, and the servants to doe his worke, care of provision and protection doth not trouble them. Most of our disquietnesse in our calling, is that wee trouble our felves about Gods worke. Trust God and be doing, and let him alone with the rest. Hee stands upon his credit so much, that it shall appeare we have not trusted him in vaine, even when we see no appea-

rance

410	The Soules Conflict.
Cap. 25.	rance of doing any good. Peter fished all night and catched nothing, yet up
Luke 5.6.	on Christs word hee casts in his net a-
	gaine, and caught so many fish as brake
	his net. Covetousnesse (when men will
	be richer then God would have them)
	troubles all, it troubles the house, the
	whole family, and the house within us
	our precious soule, which should beea
Mat. 6.33.	quiet house for Gods spirit to dwell in,
	whose seat is a quiet spirit. If men would follow Christs method, and
	seeke first the Kingdome of heaven, all o
	ther things would bee cast upon them.
	If thoughts of insufficiency in our pla-
	ces discourage us, remember what God
	faith to Moses, when he pretended dis.
	ability to speake, Who hath made mans
Exod.4.11	mouth, have not I the Lord? All our
	fufficiency for every calling is from
	God.
Object.	But you will say, Though by Godsblef
	sing my particular condition be comforta-
	ble, yet the flate of Gods people abroad, and

the miseries of the times disquiet me. We complaine of the times, but let us take heed wee bee not a part of the

misery

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conti which misery of the times: that they be not the worse for us. Indeed hee is a dead member, that takes not to heart the ill of the times, yet here is place for that complaint, Help Lord. In these tempests doe as the Disciples did, Cry to Christ to rebuke the tempests and stormes. This is the day of Iacobs trouble, let it also be the day of Iacobs trust; let the body doe as the head did in the like case, and in time it shall bee with the body as it is with the head.

In this case it is good to lay before God all the promises made to his Church, with the examples of his presence in it, and deliverance of the same informer times. God is never neerer his Church then when trouble is neere: when in earth they conclude an utter overthrow, God is in heaven concludeing a glorious deliverance: usually after the lowest ebbe, followes the highest spring tide. Christ stands upon Mount Zion. There is a Counsell in heaven, that will dash the mould of all contrary Counsels on earth; and which is more, God will worke the Ee

Cap. 25.

Hab.3.

Pfal.12.

Comfort in regard of the afflictions of the Church. Cap. 25.

raising of the Church, by that very meanes by which his enemies seek to ruine it. Let us stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord. God gave too deare a price for his Church, to suffer it long in the hands of mercilesse enemies.

As for the feeming flourishing of the enemies of Gods Church, it is but for a time, and that a short time, and a meafured time, The wicked plot against the just, they are plosters and plowers of mischiefe, they are skilfull and industrious in it, but they reape their owne raine. Their day is a comming, and their pit uin digging: take heed therefore of fretting, because of the man that bringel wicked devices to passe; for the armes of the wicked shall be broken. Wee should help our faith by observing Gods executing of judgement in this kinde. It cannot but vexe the enemies of the Church, to see at length a disappoint

ing of their projects, but then to fee the mould of all their devices turned upon their owne heads, will more to

ment them.

Pfal.37.12

lob 4.8.

Pfal.37.12 Pfal.94.13

Pfal.37.7. Pfal.37.17 Reade Pfalmes

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Pfal .73.

In this case, it will much comfort to goe into the Sanctuary, for there wee shall be able to say, Tet God is good to Ifrael. God hath an Arke for his, there is no condition so ill, but there is Balme in Gilead, comfort in Ifrael. The depths of misery, are never beyond the depths of mercy. God oft for this very end, strips his Church of all helpes below, that it may onely rely upon him: and that it may appeare that the Church is ruled by an higher power then it is opposed by. And then is the time when we may expet great deliverances of the Church, when

there is a great faith in the great God. From all that hath beene faid, wee see, that the only way to quiet the soul is, to lay a charge upon it to trust God, and that unquietnesse and impatiency, are symtomes and discoveries of an un-

beleeving heart.

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CHAP. XXVI.

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Of divine reasons in a beleever. Of his minding to praise God, more then to bu delivered.

TO goe on. [I shall yet praise him.] In these words David expressen the reasons and grounds of his trust, namely from the interest hee had in spe God by experience and special coveragion nant, wherein in generall we may observe, that those who truly trust in God ns, labour to back their faith with found ner arguments; faith is an understanding fe grace, it knowes whom it trufts, and for Prin what, and upon what grounds it trusts con Reason of it selfe cannot finde what we y to should beleeve, yet when God hathdil bule covered the same, faith tells us ther is great reason to beleeve it; faith uses reason (though not as a ground yet) a love

a sanctified instrument to finde ou g a Gods grounds, that it may rely upon dre them. He beleeves best, that knowe ew best why hee should beleeve; Confi

dence, and love, and other affections chas

Back faith with ftrong reasons.

the foule, though they have no reason | Cap. 26. grafted in them, yet thus farre they are reasonable, as that they are in a wise man raised up, guided, and laid downe

with reason, or else men were neither whe blamed nor praised for ordering

their affections aright; whereas not only civill vertue, but grace it selse is e-

specially conversant in ruling the affetions by fanctified reason.

The soule guides the will and affecti. m, otherwise then it doth the outward members of the body. It swayes the fections of confidence, love, joy, &c. as a Prince doth his wifer subjects, and as Sounfellors doe a well ordered State way ministring reasons to them, but the bill pule governes the outward members et y command, as a master doth a slave, his will is enough. The hand and foot ctl a ove upon command, without regardou gany reason, but wee will not trust

we ew of reason at the least. Sinne it selfe never wanted a reason, nfi south as it is, but we call it unreasonable, the cause it hath no good reason for it;

of drejoyce in God without reason, or a

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* Stat pro ratione voluntas.

Sin hath its reason.

Cap. 26. for reason being a beame of God, cannor strengthen any worke of darknesse. God having made man an understanding creature, guides him by a way funble to fuch a condition, and that is the reason why God in mercy yeelds so fai tous in his word, as to give us fo many reasons of our affiance in him. What is encouragement and comfort, but a demonstration to us of greater reasonsto raise us up, then there are to castus downe.

Davids reasons (here) are drawn partly from some promise of delive rance, and partly from Gods nature and dealing with him, whom, as he had for merly found an healing, & a faving Gi so he expects to finde him still; and partly from the covenant of grace heel my God:

The chiefe of his reasons are setche from God, what he is in bimselfe, an what hee is and will be to his children and what to him in particular; thoug godly men have reasons for their tra yet those reasons be divine and spirit all as faith it selfe is : for as naturally

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beames come from the Sunne, and branches from the reote, even fo by dine discourse one truth issueth from other. And as the beames and the junne, as the roote and branches are all of one nature, so the grounds of comfortable truths, and reasons taken from those grounds, are both of same divinity and authority, though in time of temptation discourse is oft so troubled, that it cannot see how one truth riseth from another; this is one priviledge of heaven, that our knowledge there shall not be so much discoursive, proving one thing by another, as definitive, seeing things in their grounds with a more present view: the soule being then raised and enlarged to a present conceiving of things, and there being no flesh and blood in us, to raise objections that must be satisfied with reasoning.

Sometimes in a clearer state of the soule, faith hath not so much use of reasons, but upon neere and sweet communion with God, and by reason of some likenesse betweene the soule that hath a divine nature stamped upon it,

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Cap. 26. A godly mans reafons are divine.

and God, it presently without any long discourse, runneth to God as it were by a supernaturall instinct, as by a nachrall instinct a childe runneth to his Fair ther in any distresse. Yea, and from that common light of nature, which discovereth there is a God, even naturall men in extremities will runne to God, and God as the Author of nature will sometimes heare them, as he doth the yong Ravens that cry unto him; but comfortably, and with affurance onely those have a familiar, recourse unto him, that have a fanctified surable disposition unto God, as being well acquainted with him.

Sometimes againe faith is put to it to use reasons to strengthen it selfe, and therefore the soule studieth arguments to help it selfe by, either from inward store laid up in the soule, or else it hearkeneth, and yeelds to reasons suggested by others; and there is no gracious heart, but hath a frame sutable and agreeable to any holy and comfortable truth that shall be brought and enforced upon it; there is something in his spirit

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it that answers what ever comes Cap. 26. from the spirit of God: though perhaps it never heard of it before, yet it presently claimes kindred of it, as comming from the same bleffed Spring, the hely Spirit; and therefore a gracious heart sooner takes comfort then ano-

ther, as being prepared to close with it. The reasons here brought David, are not fo much arguments to convince his judgement, as motives and inducements to encline his will to trust in God, for trusting being a holy relying upon God, carieth especially the will to him; now the will is led with the goodnesse of things, as the understanding is led with truth; heart must be sweetned with consideration of love and mercy in him whom we trust, as well as convinced of his ability to doe us good, the cords that draw the heart to trust, are the cords of leve, and the cords of love are especially the love of him to us whom we love; and therefore the most prevailing reasons that carie the whole heart, are such as are drawne from the sweetnesse of God.

God, whereby the heart is opened and enlarged to expect all good, and nothing but good from him.

But we must remember that neither reasons from the truth and power of God, nor inducements or allurements from the goodnesse of God, will further prevaile with the soule, then it hath a fresh light and rellish brought into it by the spirit of God, to discerne of those reasons, and answer the con-

trary.

[I will praise him.] David here minds praising of God more then his owne delivery, because he knew his owne delivery was intended on Gods part, that he might be glorified; It is an argument of an excellent spirit, when all selfe-respects are drowned in the glory of God; and there is nothing lost therein, for our best being is in God; A Christian begins with loving God for himselfe; but he ends in loving himselfe in and for God, and so his end, and Gods end, and the end of all things elfe, concenter and agree in one; We may ayme at our owne good, so wee bring our hearts

hearts to referre it to the chiefe good, as a lesse circle may well be contained in a greater, so that the lines drawn from both circles, meete in one middle point. It is an excellent ground of sincerity, to desire the favour of God, not so much out of selfe aymes, as that God may have the more free and full praise from us, considering the soule is never more sit for that blessed duty, then when it is in a cheerefull plight.

It rejoyced David more, that hee should have a large heart to serve God, then that he should have enlargement of condition. Holy dispositions thinke not so much of the time to come, that it will bee sweet to them, as that it will further Gods praise. True grace raiseth the soule, above selfe-respects, and resteth not till it comes to the chiefe end, wherein its happinesse consists.

God is glorified in making us happy, and wee (enjoying happinesse) must glorifie God. Although God condescend so low unto us, as not onely to allow us, but to enjoying us to looke to

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our owne freedome from misery, and enjoyment of happinesse, yet a soule throughly seasoned with grace, mounteth higher, and is caried with pure respects to advance Gods glory; yea somtimes so farre, as to forget it owne happinesse, it respects it selse for God. rather then God for it selfe. A heavenly soule is never satisfied, untill it be as neere God as is attaineable. And the neerer a creature comes to God, the more it is emptied of it selfe, and all selfe-aymes. Our happinesse is more in bim, then in our selves. Wee seeke our Celves most, when we deny our Celves most. And the more wee labour to advance God, the more we advance our owne condition in him.

[I will praise.] David thinkes of his owne duty in praising God, more then of Gods worke in delivering him: Let us thinke of what is our duty, and God will thinke of what shall bee for our comfort; we shall feele God answering what we looke for from him, in doing what hee expects from us. Can wee have so meane thoughts of him, as that

that we should intend his glory, and Cap. 26. hee not much more intend our good?

This should be a strong plea unto us in our prayers, to prevaile with God, when we ingage our felves upon the revelation of his mercy to us, to yeeld him all the praises. Lord as the benefit and comfort shall be mine, so the praifes shall be thine.

It is little lesse then blasphemy, to praise God for that which by unlawfull shifts we have procured; for besides the bypocrisie of it (in seeming to facrifice to him, when we facrifice indeed to our owne wits and carnall helps) we make him a Patron of those wayes which he most abhorres; and it is Idolatry in the highest degree, to transforme God so in our thoughts, as tothinke he is pleased with that which comes from his greatest enemy. And there is a groffe mistake to take Gods curse for a bleffing; to thrive in an ill way, is a spirituall judgement, extreamly hardening the heart.

It is an argument of Davids fincerity here, that he meant not to take any indirect

We ought not to praise God in doing cvill

1 Sam.27. IO.

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some breakings out of flesh and blood, endeavouring to helpe our felves in danger, so farre as not to take advantage of them to desert us in trouble, as in David who escaped from Achie by counterfeiting; and this yeelds a double ground of thankfulnesse, partly for Gods overlooking our miscariage, and partly for the deliverance it selfe. Yet this indulgence of God, will make the soule more ashamed afterward for these sinfull shifts, therefore it must be no president to us. There can neither be grace nor wisdome in setting upona course, wherein we can neither pray to God for successe in, nor blesse God when

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when he gives it. In this case God most Cap. 27. bleffeth, where he most croffeth, and most curseth where the deluded heart thinkes he bleffeth most.

CHAP. XXVII.

In our worst condition wee have cause to praise God. Still ample cause in these dayes.

Shall yet praise him.] Or, yet I will praise God; that is, however it goeth with me, yet as I have a cause, so I have a spirit to praise God; when we are at the lowest, yet it is a mercy that we are not consumed, we are never so ill, but it might be worse with us: whatsoever is lesse then hell is undeserved. It is a matter of praise, that yet we have time and opportunity to get into a bleffed condition. The Lord bath affli- Pfal. 8.18 Eted me fore, but he hath not delivered mee to death, faith David.

In the worst times there is a presence of God with his children.

1. In moderating the measure of the

Cap. 27. the croffe, that it be not above their strength. 2. In moderating the time of it, The rod of the wicked shall not rest long upon the Pfal.125.2. lot of the righteous. God limits both mea. fure and time. 3. Hee is present in mixing some 3. comfort, and so allaying the bitternesse of a croffe. 4. Yea, and he supports the soule by inward strength; so as though it faint, yet it shall not utterly faile. 5. God is present in sanctifying a 5. croffe for good, and at length when he hath perfected his owne worke in his, he is present for a finall deliverance of them. A found hearted Christian hath alwayes a God to goe to, a promise to goe to, former experience to goe to, besides some present experience of Gods goodnesse which he enjoyes: for the present he is a childe of God, a member of Christ, an heire of heaven; hee dwells in the love of God in the crosse, as well as out of it, hee may bee cast out of his happy condition in the world, but never out of Gods favour.

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 27.

Pfal. 51-15

Praise is most comly in prosperity. is beautifull in its owne time, the graces of Christianity have their severall offices at severall seasons, in trouble, prayer is in its season, in the evill day call upon me, saith God: In better times praises should appeare and shew themselves. When God manifests his goodnesse to his, hee gives them grace with it, to manifest their thankfulnesse to him. Praising of God is then most comely (though never out of feafon) when God seemes to call for it, by renewing the fense of his mercies in some fresh favour towards us. If a bird will fing in Winter, much more in the Spring. If the heart be prepared in the Winter time of advertity to praise God, how ready will it bee when it is warmed with the glorious funthine of his favour.

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Our life is nothing, but as it were a mebbe woven with interminglings of wants and favours, croffes and blessings, standings and failings, combate and victory, therefore there should be a perpetual intercourse of praying and praises in our hearts. There is alwayes a ground

ground of communion with God in one of these kindes, till wee come to that condition wherein all wants shall be supplied, where indeed is only matter of praise. Yet praising God in this life, hath this prerogative, that here we praise him in the middest of his enemies. In heaven all will bee in consort with us. God esteemes it an honour in the middest of devils, and wicked men (whose life is nothing but a dishonour of him) to have those that will make his name (as it is in it selfe, so) great in the world.

David comforts himselfe in this, that he should praise God; which shewes he had inured himselfe well before to this holy exercise, in which hee found such comfort, that he could not but joy in the fore-thoughts of that time, wherin he should have fresh occasion of his former acquaintance with GOD. Thoughts of this nature enter not into a heart that is strange to God.

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It is a special Art in time of misery, to thinke of matter of joy, it not for the present, yet for the time to come; for Ff 2

Cap. 27. Christians have continuall ground of communion with God.

Thoughts of praise should be precious to us. Cap. 27.

joy disposeth to praise, and praise again stirres up joy; these mutually breed one another, even as the feed brings forth the tree, and the tree brings forth the feed. It is wisdome therefore to set faith on worke, to take as much comfort as wee can from future promises, that wee may have comfort and strength for the present, before we have the full possession of them. It is thenature of faith to antidate bleffings, by making them that are to be performed bereafter, as present now, because wee have them in the promise. If God had not allowed us to take many things in trust for the time to come, both for his glory, and our good, hee would never have left such rich promises to us. For faith doth not only give glory to God for the present (in a present beleevingot his truth, and relying upon him) but as it lookes forward, it sees an everlafling ground of praising God, andis stirred up to praise him now, for that future matter of praise, which it is sure to have hereafter. The very hopes of future good, made David praise God

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Cap. 27.

Heb.11.1.

for the present. If the happy condition wee looke for were present, wee would embrace it with present praises. Now faith is the evidence of things not seene, and gives a being to that, which is not; whereupon a true beleeving soule cannot but bee a praising soule. For this end God reveales before hand what wee shall have, that before hand we should praise him, as if we possessed it. For that is a great honour to his truth, when wee esteeme of what hee speakes, as done, and what he promiseth, as already performed. Had wee not a perpetuall considence in the per-

sible we should praise him?

But we want those grounds for the time to come which David had, bee had particu.

peruity of his love to us, how is it pos-

lar promises which we want.

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Though we want Vrim and Thummim; and the Prophets to foretell us
what the times to come shall be, yet we
have the Canon of Scripture enlarged,
we live under a more glorious manifestation of Christ, and under a more
plentiful shedding of the Spirit, wherFf3 by

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The Soules Conflict.

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ees, wherein	pon they n	ay ground par-	
" sicular pro	ver Luth	r praying for a	
" ficke frien	d who was	very comforta-	
While and m	Cefull to his	n, had a particu	Fred. Myco.
6 lar en Cover	for his reco	very, whereup-	
Con he was	fo confide	nt, that he fent	
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would reveal	e himfelfe	in more famili-	B. 3
ar maner to	them, in m	nany particulars	
		hole particular	
SHED .	Ff4	promifes	

Cap. 27. promises in the 91. Psalme, and other places, are made good to fuch as have a particular faith, and to all others (with those limitations annexed to promises of that nature) so far forth as God seeth it will induce to their good and his owne glory, and so farre forth as they depend upon him in the use of meanes; And is not this sufficient to stay a gracious heart?

> But not to infift upon particular promises and revelations, (the performance whereof wee enjoy here in this present life) we have rich and precious promises of finall and full deliverance from all evill, and perfect enjoying of all good in that life which is to come; yet not fo to come, but that we have the earnest and first fruits of it here; All is not kept for heaven; Wee may fay with David, Ob how great is thy good. nesse, which thou hast laid up for them that fearethee, and (not onely so, but) how great is that goodnesse which thou hast wrought in them that truft in thee, cven before the sons of men; God treasures not up all his goodnesse for the time to come,

Pfal.31.19

come, but layes much of it out daily Cap. 27. before such as have eyes to behold it.

Now Gods maine end in revealing fuch glorious promises of the life to come, is, that they might be a ground of comfort to us, and of praise to him even in this life; And indeed what can be grievous in this world to him that hath heaven in his eye? What made our bleffed Saviour endure the Meb. 12.2 cresse and despise shame, but the joy of glory to come fet before him?

The duty that David brought his heart to before hee had a full enjoyment of what he looked for, was patient waiting, it being Gods use to put a long date often times to the performance of his promises; David after he had the promise of a Kingdome, was put off a long time ere he was invested to it; Abraham was an olde man before he enjoyed his sonne of the Promise; loseph stayed a long time before he was exalted; Our bleffed Saviour himselfe was thirty foure yeares olde before he was exalted up into glory.

God deferres, but his deferring is no empry

Waiting upon God a necessary duty.

Cap. 27. empty space, wherein no good is done, but there is in that space a fitting for promises. Whilest the seed lyeth hid in the earth, time is not loft, for Win. ter fits for Spring, yea the harder the Winter, the more hopefull the Spring; yet were it a meere empty space wee should hold out, because of the great things to come, but being onely a preparing time, we should passe it with the lesse discouragement. Let this support us in all the thwartings of our defire; it is a folly to thinke, that wee should have Physick and health both at once: we must endure the working of Gods Physick; when the sick humour iscaried away and purged, then wee shall enjoy defired health. God promiseth forgivenesse of sinne, but thou findest the burthen of it daily on thee. Cheere up thy selfe, when the morning is darkest, then comes day; after a weary weeke comes a Sabbath, and after a fight victory will appeare. Gods time is best, therefore resolve upon waiting his leifure. For the better demeaning of our felves herein, we must know we must

must so waite, that we provoke not in the meane time his patience on whom we depend, by putting forth our hand to any evill, which indeed is a croffing of our hopes. Therefore waiting upon God, is alwayes joyned with doing good. There is an influence in the thing hoped for, in the spirit of him that truly hopes, stirring him up to a surable conformity, by purging himself of whatso ever will not stand with the holines of Waiting implyes all that condition. graces, as Patience, Perseverance, Long suffering in holding out, notwithstanding the tediousnesse of time deferred, Courage, and breaking through all diffi. culties that stand betweene. For what is waiting indeed, but a continuing in a gracious inoffensive course, till the accomplishment of our defires?

Whence wee may discerne a maine difference betwixt a Christian, and a carnall man, who is short-spirited, and all for the present; hee will have his good here, whereas a Saint of God continues still waiting, though all things seeme contrary to what he ex-

pects.

Cap. 27.

What it is to waite upon God Cap. 27. Heb.11.25

pects. The presence of things to come is such to faith, as it makes it despise the pleasure of sinne for a season. What evidence of goodnes is it, for a man to be good onely upon the apprehension of something that contents him? Here is the glory of faith, that it can upon Gods bare promise, crosse it selse in things pleasing to nature, and raise up the soule to a disposition, some wayes answerable to that blessed estate. which (though yet it enjoyes not, yet) it is undoubtedly perswaded of, and lookes for. What can incourage us more to waite, then this, that the good we waite for, is greater then wee are able to conceive, yea greater then wee can defire or hope for?

This was no presumptuous resolution of Davids owne strength, but it is sued from his present truth of heart, (so farre as he knew the same;) together with an humble dependance upon God, both for deliverance, and a heart to praise him for it; because Gods benefits are usually entire, and are sweetned with such a sense of his love, as

causeth

causeth a thankfull heart, which (to a Cap. 28. true Christian) is a greater blessing then the deliverance it selfe, as making the soule better. David doth acknowledge with humble admiration, that a heart enlarged comes from God, Who am I (faith he) and who are my people?

He mentioneth here praising God, in stead of deliverance, because a heart enlarged to praise God, is indeed the greatest part of the deliverance; for by it the, foule is delivered out of its owner

straits and discontent.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Divers qualities of the praise due to God. With helps therein. And notes of Gods hearing our prayers.

"Hough this be Gods due and our duty, and in it felfe a delightfull thing, yet it is not so easie a matter to praise God, as many imagine: Musick is sweet, but the setting of the strings in tune is unpleasing; our soules will not be long in tune, and it is harsh to us to go about

No eafic praise God aright.

clocks, a little thing will hinder the motion; especially passion, which disturbs not onely the frame of grace in us, but the very frame of nature, putting man out of the power and possession of himselfe; and therefore David here, when he had thoughts of praising God, was faine to take up the quarrell betwixt him and his soule first; Praising sets all the parts and graces of the soule had need gather it selfe and its strength to gether to this duty.

Self denyal requitite in prailing God. It requires especially selfe-denyall, from a conscience of our own wants, weaknesses, and unworthinesse; it requires a giving up of our selves, and all ours to be at Gods dispose; the very ground and the fruit which it yeelds are both Gods; and they never gave themselves truly up to God, that are not ready to give all they have to him when soever he calls for it; thankfulnesse is a sacrifice, and in sacrifices there must be killing before offering, otherwise the sacrifice will be as the offering up of some

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some uncleane creature; thank seiving is an Incense, and there must be fire to burne that Incense; thanksgiving reguires not onely affections, but the beat of affections; there must be some assurance of the benefit wee praise God for; and it is no easie matter to maintaine affurance of our interest in the best things.

Yet in this case if we feele not sense ofassurance, it is good we should praise God for what we have; we cannot deny but God offers himselfe in mercy to us, and that he intends our good thereby, for so wee ought to construe his mercifull dealing towards us, and not have him in jealousie without ground; if we bring our hearts to be willing to praise God, for that wee cannot but acknowledge comes from him, hee will be ready in his time to shew himselfe more clearely to us; we taste of his goodnesse many wayes, and it is accompanied with much patience, and these in their natures leade us not onely to repentance, Rom.z.4. but likewise to thankfull acknowledgement; and wee ought to follow that

Cap. 28.

What a Christian should doe in want of affurance.

which

which God leades us unto, though hee hath not yet acquainted us with his fecrets.

Resolution necessary in Christinanty.

It is good in this case to help the soule with a firm resolution, and to back refolution with a vene, not onely in generall that we will praise, but particularly of fomething within our owne power, (provided it prove no snare to us) For by this meanes the heart is perfeetly gayned, and the thing is as good as done in regard of Gods acceptance, and our comfort; because strong resolutions discover sincerity without any hypocriticall refervation and hollownesse. Alwayes so much fincerity as a man hath, so much will his inward peace be. Resolution as a strong streame beares downe all before it; little good is done in Religion without this, and with it all is as good as done.

So soone as we set upon this worke, wee shall feele our spirits to rise higher and higher as the waters in the Sanduary, as the soule growes more and more heated; see how David riseth by degrees, Be glad in the Lord, and then, re-

Pfal. 22.11.

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joyce ye righteous, and then, showt for ioy all yee that are upright in heart, the spirit of God will delight to carry us along in this duty, untill it leaves our spirits in heaven, praising God with the Saints and glorious Angels there; to him that Mat. 25.19. hath and useth it shall be given; hee that knoweth God aright, will honour him by trusting of him; hee that honours him by trusting him, will honour him by praying; and he that honours him by prayer, shall honour him by praises; hee that honours him by praises bere, shall perfect his praises in heaven; and this will quit the labour of setting and keeping the soule in tune; this trading with God is the richest trade in the world; when we returne praises to him, he returnes new favours to us, and fo an everlasting ever-encreasing intercourse betwixt God and the soule is maintained; David here resolved to praise God, because hee had affurance of such a deliverance, as would yeeld him ground of praising him.

Praising of God may well be called Praise, a Incense, because as it is sweet in it selfe,

Gg and Cap. 28.

and sweet to God, so it sweetens all that comes from us. Love and loy are sweet in themselves, though those whom wee love and joy in should not know of our affection, nor returne the like; but wee cannot love and joy in God, but hee will delight in us; when we neglect the praising of God, we lose both the comforts of Gods love, and our owne too; It is a spirituall judgement to want or lose the fight or sense of Gods favours. for it is a fign of want of spirituall life, or at least livelinesse; it shewes wee are not yet in the state of those whom God hath chosen, to set forth the riches of his glory upon.

When we consider that if we answer not kindnesse, and favour shewed unto us by men, we are esteemed unworthy of respect (as having sinned against the bond of humane society and love) were cannot but much more take shame to our selves, when wee consider the disproportion of our carriage, and unkind behaviour towards God; when in stead of being temples of his praise, wee become graves of his benefits; what a va-

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nity is this in our nature, to stand upon exactnesse of justice, in answering perry curtesies of men, and yet to passe by the substantiall favours of God, without scarce taking notice of them? the best breeding is to acknowledge greatest respects where they are most due; and to think, that if unkindnesse and rudenesse be a sinne in civility, it is much more in Religion; the greatest danger of un. thankfulnesse, is in the greatest matter of all; if wee arrogate any spirituall strength to our selves in spirituall actions, wee commit either sacriledge in robbing God of his due; or mockerie, by praising him for that which we hold to be of our selves; if injustice be to be condemned in man, much more in denying God his due, Religion being the first due. It takes much from thankfulnesse, when we have common conceits of peculiar favours, praise is not comely in the mouth of fooles, Godloves no blind facrifice.

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We should therefore have wisdome and judgement, not onely to know upon what grounds to be thankfull, but in

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Cap. 28.

Vnthankfulnes most bainous towards God.

Mal.1.8.

Gods love in every mercy chiefly to ' be looked at.

Not to delay our praises. what order, by discerning what be the best and first savours whence the rest proceed, and which adde a worthiness to all the rest; it is good to see blessings, as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing, to see the love and savour of God in it, which is more to be valued then the blessing it selfe; as it much commends any thing that comes from us, when we put a respect of thankfulnesse, and love to God upon it; and if we observe we shall find the unkindnesse of others to us, is but a correction of our unkindnesse to God.

In praising God, it is not good to delay, but take advantage of the freshnesse of the blessing; what we adde to delay, we take from thankfulnesse, and withall, lose the prime and first fruits of our affections; It is a wise redeeming of time, to observe the best seasons of thankfulnesse; a cheerefull heart will best close with a cheerefull duty; and therefore it is not good to waste so sit a temper in frivolous things, but after some contentment given to nature, let God have the fruit of his owne planting; ing; otherwise it is even no better then the refreshing of him that standeth by a good fire, and cryeth Ah, ah, I am warme.

Cap. 28.

Ifa.44.16.

David doth not say, I will thanke God, but I shall praise him; (though hee, intends that) Thankes is then best when it tends to praising, and there ends; for thankes alone shewes respect to our owne good onely, praises to Gods glary, and in particular to the glory of such excellencies whence the benefit comes; and from thence the soule is enlarged to thinke highly of all Gods excellencies.

Hanna upon particular thankes for hearing her about a childe, takes occasion to set out Gods other excellencies, and riseth higher and higher, from one to many, from the present time, to that which was to come, from particular favours to her selfe, she stirres up others to praise God for his mercy to them; So David, Deliver me, O God, and my tongue shall sing of thy praises; Hee propounds this as an ingagement to the Lord to helpe him, because it should

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1 Sam,2,1.

Pfal.sr.

tend to the inlargement of his glory; he was resolved to improve Gods sa. your this way.

Our thankes thould bee large.

The Spirit of God workes like new wine, enlarging the spirit from one degree of praising God to another; and because it foresees the eternity of Gods love, (as farre as it can) it endeavours an eternity of Gods praise; a gracious heart upon taste of favour shewed to it selfe, is presently warmed to spread the praise of God to others, and the more it fees the fruit of trusting God, and his truth in performing promise, the more it still honours that trusting, as knowing that it lyes upon Gods honour, to honour those that honour him; bleffing will procure bleffing; the foule hath never fuch freedome from sinne, as when it is in a thankfull frame; for thankfulnes issues from a heart truly humbled, and emptied of it selfe, truly loving and rejoycing in God; and upon any finne the spirit is grieved and straitned, and the lips sealed up in such a heart; for the conscience upon any sinne, lookes upon it not only as disobedience against Gods

2 Sam.30.

Gods will and authority, but as unthankfulnesse to his goodnesse, and this melteth a godly heart most of all; Whe Nathan told David God had done this, and this for him, and was ready to doe more, he could not hold in the confession of his finne, but relented and gave in presently.

We ought not onely to give thanks, but to be thankfull to meditate and study the praises of God. Our whole life should be nothing else but a continuall bleffing of his holy name, endeavouring to bring in all we have, and to lay it out for God and his people, to see where he hath any receivers; our goodnesse is nothing to God, wee need bring Pfal. 16.2. no water to the fountaine, nor light to the Sun. Thankfulnesse is full of invention, it deviseth liberall things; though it be our duty to be good Stewards of our talents, yet thankfulnesse addes a lustre, and a more gracious acceptance, as having more of that which God calls for.

Our praising God should not bee as sparkes out of a flint, but as water out

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Cap. 28.

2 Sam. 12

We should fludy Gods praises.

Praise should be free.

Cap. 28. Mic.7. 8.

Pf.145.10.

of a spring, naturall ready, free, as Gods love to us is; mercy pleases him, so should praises please us; It is our happinesse when the best part in us, is exercised about the best and highest worke; it was a good speech of him that said, If God had made me a Night. ingale, I would have fung as a Nightingale, but now God hath made meea man, I will fing forth the praises of God, which is the worke of a Saint onely; All thy workes bleffetbee, and thy Saints praise thee; All things are either bleffings in their nature, or so bleffed, as they are made bleffings to us by the over-ruling comming of him, who maketh all things serviceable to his, even the worst things in this sense are made spirituall to Gods people against their owne nature; how great is that goodnesse which makes even the worst things good?

The least mercy to be prized. Little favours come from no small love, but even from the same love that God intends the greatest things to us, and are pledges of it; the godly are more thankfull for the least favours, then worldly men for the greatest; the affection

affection of the giver inhaunces the Cap. 28. gift.

O then let us labour to improve, both what we have, and what we are to his glory: It discovers that we love God, (not onely with all our understanding, heart, and affection, but) when with all our might and power, so farre as we have advantage by any part, relatien, or calling whatfoever we endeavour to doe him service, wee cannot have a greater honour in the world, then to be honoured of God, to be abundant in this kinde.

Our time here is short, and we shall all ere long bee called to a reckoning, therefore let us study reall praises. Gods bleffing of us is in deed, and so should ours be of him. Thankes in words is good, but in deeds is better; leaves are good, but fruit isbetter, and of fruit, that which costs us most. True praise requires our whole man, the judgement to esteeme, the memory to treasure up, the will to resolve, the affections to delight, the tongue to speake of, and the life to expresse the rich favours of God: what Our praise fhould be reall.

what can we thinke of? what can we call to minde? what can we resolve upon? what can we speake? what can we expresse in our whole course, better then the praises of him, of whom, and through whom, and to whom wee and all things are.

Rom.11.

Our whole life should speake no. thing but thankfulnesse; every condition and place we are in, should be a witnesse of our thankfulnesse; this will make the times and places wee live in, the better for us; when wee our felves are monuments of Gods mercy, it is fit we should be patternes of his praises, and leave monuments to others; Wee should thinke life is given us, to doe something better then life in : we live not to live; our life is not the end of it selfe, but the praise of the giver; God hath joyned his glory and our happinesse together; it is fit that wee should referre all that is good to his glory, that hath joyned his glory to our best good, in being glorified in our salvation.

David concludes, that he should cer-

rainly praise God, because he had prayed Cap. 28. unto him. Prayers be the seeds of praifes, I have fowen, therefore I will reap; what we receive as a fruit of our pray. ers, is more sweet then what wee have by a generall providence.

But how doe wee know that God beares Object.

our prayers ?

1. If we regard them our selves, and expect an issue; prayer is a sure adventure, we may well looke for a returne.

2. It is a figne God hath heardour prayers, when hee stirres up thankfulnesse aforehand upon assurance; thankfulnesse cannot be without either the grace of God, by which we are thankfull, or some taste of the things we are thankfull for. God often accepts the prayer, when hee doth not grant the thing, and will give us thereby occasion of thanksgiving for his wise care, in changing one bleffing for another fitter for us. God regards my prayers, when by prayer my heart is wrought to that frame which he requires, that is, an humble subjection to him, from an acknowledgement of my wants, and his fulnesse.

Answ.

454	The Soules Conflict.
Cap. 28.	fulnesse. There is nothing stirred up in our hearts by the Spirit, no, not so much as a gracious desire, but God will answer it, if we have a spirit to waite
3•	3. We may know God hath accepted our prayer, whe he makes the way easie & plain after prayer by a gracious providence; when the course of things
	begin to change, and we meete with comforts in stead of former crosses, and finde our hearts quieted and encoura- ged against what we most feared.
4.	4. Likewise earnestnesse in prayer is a signe God heares our prayers, as sire kindled from heaven sheweth God accepts the sacrifice; the ground of prevailing by our prayer, is, that they are put up in a gracious name, and for persons in favour, and dictated by Gods owne spirit; they work in the strength
	of the bleffed Trinity not their owne, giving God the glory of all his excellencies.
Pal.50.15	It is Gods direction to call upon him

introuble, & it is his promise to deliver; and then both his direction and promise

that we shall glorific bim; When trou-

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bles stirre up prayer, Gods answer to them will stirre up prayes. David when he saith, I shall praise God, presupposes God would deliver him, that he might have ground of praising his name. And he knew God would deliver him, because as from faith he had prayed for deliverance, so hee knew it was the order of Gods dealing, to revive after drooping, and refresh after fainting. God knowes otherwise that our spirits would faile before him.

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A thankfull disposition, is a speciall help in an afflicted condition, for thank fulnesse springs from love, and love rejoyceth in suffering. Thankfulnesse raises the soule higher then it selfe, it is a trading with God, whereby as we by him, so he gaines by us. Therefore the Saints used this as a motive to God, that hee would grant their desires, because the living praise him, and not the dead. If God expect praise from us, sure he will put us into a condition of praise.

Unthankfulnesse is a sinnedetestable both to God and men, and the lesse punishment it receives from humane lawes. Cap. 28.

Acts 15.31

Isay 38.1 9

lawes, the more it is punished inwardly by secret shame, and outwardly by publique hatred, if once it prove notorious. When Gods arrests come forth for denying him his tribute, he chiefly eyes an unthankfull heart, and hates all sinne the worse, as there is more unthankfulnesse in it: the neglect of kindnesse is taken most unkindly. Why should we load God with injuries, that loadeth us with his blessings? who would requite good with evill? Such mens mercies will prove at last so many inditements against them.

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I beseech you therefore labour to be men of praises. If in any duty wee may expect assistance, we may in this, that altogether concernes Gods glory: the more we praise God, the more we shall praise him. When God by grace enlarges the will, he intends to give the deede. Gods children wherein their wils are conformable to Gods will, are sure to have them sulfilled. In a fruitfull ground, a man will sow his best seed. God intends his owne glory in every mercy, and he that praises him, glorifies him,

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2 Cor.5.16

him. When our wills therefore cary us to that which God wills above all, wee may well expect he will satisfie our defires. The living God is a living fountaine never drawne dry, he hath never done so much for us, but hee can and will doe more. If there be no end of our praises, there shall be no end of his goodnesse: no way of thriving like to this. By this meanes we are fure never to be very miserable; how can he bee dejected, that by a sweet communion with God sets himselfe in heaven? nay maketh his heart a kinde of heaven, A Temple, a holy of holies, wherein Incense is offered unto God. It is the sweetest branch of our Priestly office, to offer up these daily sacrifices; It is not only the beginning, but a further entrance of our heaven upon earth, and shall bee oneday our whole imployment for ever.

all Praise is a just and due debt.

Praise is a just and due tribute for all Gods blessings; for what else especially doe the best favours of God call for at our hands? How doe all creatures praise God, but by our mouthes? It is

a debt alwayes owing, and alwayes pay. ing; and the more we pay, the more we shall owe; upon the due discharge of this debt, the soule will finde much peace. A thankfull heart to God for his bleffings, is the greatest bleffing of all. Were it not for a few gracious foules, what honour should God have of the rest of the unthankfull world? which should stirre us up the more to be trumpets of Gods praises in the midst of his enemies, because this (in some sort) hath a prerogative above our praising God in heaven, for there God hath no enemies to dishonour him.

Praising of God, A duty without exception.

Pfal.103.

This is a duty that none can except against, because it is especially a work of the heart. All cannot shew their thankfulnesse in giving or doing great matters, but all may expresse the willingnesse of their hearts. All within us may praise his holy name, though wee have little or nothing without us; and that within us is the thing Godchiesly requires. Our heart is the Altar on which wee offer this Incense; God lookes

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lookes not to quantity, but to proportion; he accepts a mite where there is no more to be had.

But how shall we be enabled to this great

daty? Enterinto a deep consideration of Gods favours, paft, present, and to come; think ofthe greatnesse and suteablenesse of them to our condition, the seasonablenesse and necessity of them every way unto us. Consider how miserable our life were without them, even without common favours; but as for spirituall favours, that make both our naturall and civill condition comfortable, our very life were death, our light were darknesse without these. In all favours thinke not of them so much, as Gods mercy and love in Christ which sweetens them. Thinke of the freenesse of this love, and the smallnesse of thy own deferts. How many bleflings doth God beltow upon us, above our deferts, yea; aboue our defires, nay, above our very

thoughts? He had thoughts of love to

us, when wee had no thoughts of our

felves. What had we been if God had

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Cap. 28.

Quest.

How we may attaine to printe Bod in fome acceptable maner.

A deepe confideration of fayours.

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not been good unto us? How many bleffings hath God bestowed upon us, that we never prayed for ? and yet we are not so ready to praise God, as to pray unto him; this more desire of what we want, then esteeming of what we have, shews too much prevailing of self-love. But

By comparing our felves with others, Secondly, comparing also our selves with others, will adde a great lustre to Gods favour, considering wee are all hewed out of one Rock, and differ nothing from the meanest, but in Gods free love. Who are wee that God should single us out for the glory of his rich mercy?

That Gods bleffings to us are, as if we onely were cared for. Considering likewise, that the blessings of God to us, are such as if mone but we had them, and God cares for us, as if hee had mone else to care for in the world besides. These things well pondered, should set the greater price upon Gods blessings; what are we in nature and grace, but Gods blessings? What is in us, about us, above us? What see we, taste week enjoy we, but blessings? All wee have or hope to have, are but dead favours

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wus, unlesse we put life into them by aspirit of Thankfulnesse. And shall we be as dead as the earth, as the stones wee tread on? Shall we live as if wee were resolved God should have no praise by us & Shall we make our selves God, ascribing all to our selves ? Nay, shall we (as many doe) fight against God with his owne favours, and turne Gods bleffings against himselfe? Shall we abuse peace to security? Plenty to ease, promises to presumption, gifts to pride? How can we please the devill better then thus doing? Oh! the wonderfull patience of God, to continue life to those whose life is nothing else, but a warring against him the giver of life.

As God hath thoughts of love to us, o should our thoughts be of praises to him, and of doing good in our places to others for his take. Think with the selfe. Is there any I may honour God by releeving, comforting, counselling? is there any of lonathans rate ? Is there any of Christs deare ones & I will doe good to them, that they together with PGLitt

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a Sam. o.t.

me, and for me may praise God. As David here checks himselfe for the failing and disquietnesse of his Spirit, and as a cure thereof, thinkes of praising God. So let us (in the like case) stir up our soules as he did, and say, Praise the Lord, a my soule, and all that is within me, set forth his boly name. Wee never use our spirits to better purpose, then when by that light we have from God, wee stirre them up to looke back againe to him.

Pfal.103.1

The excellent use of Thanksgiving.

By this it will appeare to what good purposes we had a being here in the world, and were brought into communion with Christ by the Gospell. The cariage of all things to the right end, fhewes, whose we are, and whither we tend. It abundantly appeares by Gods revealing of himselfe many wayes to us, as by Promises, Sacraments, Sabbaths, &c. that hee intended to raise up our hearts to this heavenly duty. The whole gracious dispensation of Godin Christ tends to this, that our cariage should be nothing else, but an expression of Thankfulneffe to him; that by a free

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free cheerefull and gracious disposition, we might shew we are the people of Gods free grace, set at liberty from the spirit of bondage, to serve him without feare, with a voluntary child-like service, all the dayes of our lives.

Cap. 29.

Luk.1.74.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of Gods manifold salvation for his people.

And why open, or expressed in the countenance.

Proceed.

Hee is the salvation of my counte-

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As David strengthens his trust in God, by reason fetcht from the suure goodnesse of God apprehended by saith, so hee strengthens that reason with another reason setcht from God, whom he apprehends here as the salvation of his countenance. Wee need reason against reason, and reason upon reason, to steele and strengthen the soule against the on-set of contrary reasons.

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Csp. 19.

that is, He will so save as I shall see, and my enemies shall see it; and upon see ing, my countenance shall be cheared and lifted up; Gods saving kindnesse shall be read in my countenance, so that all who looke on mee, shall say, God hath spoken peace to my soule, as well as brought peace to my condition.

That
God is not
onely falvation, but
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Mille mali
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He faith not falvation, but Jalvations: because as our life is subject to many miferies, in fale, body, and fate, publique and private, &c. fo God harh many salvations: If we have a thousand troubles, he hath a thousand wayes of help; as he hath more bleffings then one, so hee hath more salvations then one. He faves our foules from fin. our bodies from danger, and our estates from troubles He is the redeemer of his people, and nor onely to, but with him is plenteons redemption of all persons, of all parts both of body and foule, from all ill, both of finne and mifery, for all times, both now and hereafter. He is an everlatting falvation.

Pfal.130.7

David doth not fay, God will fave

merbut God is falvation it felf, and nothing but falvation. Gur finnes onely stop the current of his mercy, but it being above all our finnes, will soone scatter that cloud, remove that stop, and then we shall see and feele nothing but falvation from the Lord All his Pfal.25.10 wages are mercy and peace to a repentant foule that casts it selfe upon him. Christ himselfe is nothing else but falvation clothed in our flesh. So olde Luke 2,29. Simeon conceived of him, when he had. him in bis armee and was willing thereupon to yeeld up his spirit to God, having seen Christ the salvation of God: when we embrace Christ in the armes of our Faith, we embrace nothing but falvation. Hee makes up that sweet name given him by his Father, and brought from heaven by an Angell to the full sa name in the Faith of which, it is impossible for any beleeving soule m finke. The devill in trouble presents God to us, as a revenging destroyer, and unbeleefe presents him under a false vizard; but the skill of fath is, to present Off him Hh4

Cap: 29. Thinke of God as a Saviour in trouble.

Pfal.68.20.

him as a Saviour clothed with falvaris on. Wee should not so much looke what destruction the devill and his threaten, as what salvation God promiseth. To God belongs the iffues of death, and of all other troubles which are leffer deathes. Cannothe that hath youchfafed an issue in Christ from eternall death, vouchfafe an iffue from all remporal evills? If hee will raise our bodies can he not raile our conditions He that brought usbinto trouble; can eafily makeva way out safit when hee pleafeth) This frould bed a ground of resolute and absolute obedience, even in our greatest extremities, considering God will either deliver us (from death, or by death, and) lat length out name ofven him by his Fathtraphoo

Whither to flye in our troubles. So then, when we are in any danger, we fee whither to goe for falvation, even to him that is nothing else but falvation; but then we must trust in him (as David doth) and conceive of him as salvation, that we may trust in him live will not trust in salvation, what will we trust in? and if salvation it self cannot

not fave us, what can? out of falvation there is nothing but destruction, which those that seeke it any where out of God, are fore to meet with. How pittifull then is their case, who goe to a destroyer for salvation ? that seeke for help from hell?

Here also we see to whom to return praise intall our deliverances, even to the God of our falvation. The virgin Mary was stirred up to magnifie the Lord, but why? Her first rejoyced in God her Saviour. Who loever is the in-Arment of any good, yet salvation is of the Lord what foever brings is hee fends it Hence in their holy feasts for any deliverance, the cup they drank of, was called the Cup of Salvation; and therefore David when he summons his thoughts, what to render unto God? hee Phile.13. resolves upon this, to take the Cup of falvation. But alwayes remember this, that when we thinke of God as falvatiwee must thinke of him as hee is in Christ to his. For, so every thing in God is faving, even his most terrible attributes of justice and power : out of

Cap. 29.

Whom to returne Praifeto in all our deliverancce. Luke I.

Christ.

Cap. 29.

Iohn 14.6.

God first cheeres the heart, and then the outward manChrist, the sweetest things in Godare terrible. Salvation it selfe will not save out of Christ, who is the onely may of salvation, called the way, the truth, and the life.

David addeth (He is the falvations of my countenance) that is, hee will first speake salvation to my soule, and say, I am thy Salvatron; and when the heart is cheered (which is as it were the Sun of this little world) the beames of that joy will shine in the countenance. True joy begins at the center, and so passet to the circumference the outward man. The countenance is as the glaffe of the foul, wherein you may fee the naked face of the foule, according as the feverall affections thereof frand. In the countenance of an understanding creature, you may fee more then a bare counter nance. The spirit of one man may see the countenance of anothers inner man in his outward countenance: which hath a speech of its owne, and declares what the heart faith, and how it is affected.

Queft.

But how comes God to be the falvation of our countenance?

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answer: God onely graciously hines in the face of Jesus Christ, which we with the eye of faith beholding, receive those beames of his grace, and reflect them backe againe. God hineth upon us first, and we shine in that light of his countenance upon us. The joy of falvation; (especially of spirituall and erectoall falvation) is the onely true joy: all other fatvations end at last in destruction, and are no further comfortable then they iffue from Gods, faving love. of God will have the body partake with the foule, as in matter of griefe, fo in matter of joy, the lanthorne fhines in the light of the Candle within.

heart into the countenance, for the further spreading and multiplying of joy to others. Next unto the fight of the sweet countenance of God, is the beholding of the cheerefull countenance of a Christian friend, rejoycing from true grounds. Whence it is that the joy of one becomes the joy of many, and the joy of many meet in one; by which meanes, as many lights together make the greater

Cap. 29.

Pfal 51.12

Why God will have the falvation of his people appears openly.

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dannt and vexe the enemies. Cainifb hypocrites hang downe their heads, when God lifts up the countenance of their brethren; when the countenance of Gods children cleares up, then their enemies hearts and looks are cloudy. lerusalems joy is Babylons forem. It it with the Church & her enemies as it is with a ballance, the scales whereof when one is up the other is downe. Whilft Gods people are under a cloud, carnall people infult over them, as if they were men deferted of God. Wherupon they hang down their heads, & the rather, because they think that by reason of their sins, Christ & his Religion will suffer with them. Hence Davids care was, that the miseries of Gods people should not be told in Gath. The chief reason why the enemies of the Church gnash their teethat the fight of Gods gracious dealing, is, that they take the rising of the Church, to bee a presage of their ruine. A lesson which Hamans wife had learned.

This is a comfort to us in these times of lacebs trouble and Ziens sorrow: The captivity

Cap. 29.

2 Sam. 1.

Efth.6. 13.

Cap. 29.

Pfa.136.1.

Micah.7.8.

Zach.12.2

Luke 18.5.

captivity of the Church shall returne, as rivers in the South. Therefore the Church may say, Reioyee not over me o my enemy, though I am fallen, I shall result againe. Though Christs Spouse be now as black as the Pots, yet shee shall be white as the Dove. If there were not great dangers, where were the glory of Gods great deliverance? The Church at length will be as a Cut of trembling

at length will be as a Cup of trembling, and as a burthen some stone. The blood of the Saints cry, their enemies violence cryes, the prayers of the Church cry for deliverance, and vengeance upon the enemies of the Church: and (as that importunate widow) will at length pre-

vaile. Shall the importunity of one poore woman prevaile with an unrighteous Iudge? and shall not the prayers of many that cry unto the righteous God take effect? If there were Armies of Prayers, as there are Armies of men, wee should see the streame of things turned another way. A few Mosessin

the Mount, would doe more good then many souldiers in the valley. If wee would lift up our bearts and hands to God.

God

God, he would lift up our countenance. Cap. 29.
But alas, wee either pray not, or crosse
our owne prayers for want of love to
the truth of God and his people.

It is wee that keepe Antichrist and his faction alive, to plague the unthankfull world. The strength he hath is not from his owne cause, but from our want of zeale; we hinder those Halaluiahs by private brabbles, coldnesse and indifferency in Religion. Church begins at this time a little to lift up her head again: Now is the time to follow God with prayers, that hee would perfect his owne worke, and plead his owne cause; that he would be revenged not onely of ours, but his enemies: that he would wholly free his Church from that miserable bondage. These beginnings give our faith some hold to be encouraged to goe to God, for the fulfilling of his gracious promile, that the Church may rejoyce in the falvation of the Lord. God doth but look for some to seeke unto him: Christ doth but stay untill hee is awaked by our prayers, But it is to be feared, that Cap. 29.

God hath not yet perfected his worke in Zion. The Church is not yet fully prepared for a full and glorious deliverance. If God had once his ends in the humiliation of the Church for sinnes past, with resolution of reformation for the time to come, then this age perhaps might fee the falvation of the Lord, which the generations to come shall be witnesse of : wee should see Zion in her perfect beauty. The generations of those that came out of Egypt, saw and enjoy. ed the pleasant land which their progenitors were shut out of: who by reason of their murmuring, and looking back to Egypt, and forgetfulnesse of the wonders which God had done for, and before them, perished in the wildernesse.

Vse

There is little cause therefore of envying the present flourishing of the enemies of the Church, and of joyning and colluding with them; for it will prove the wisest resolution to resolve to fall and rise with the Church of Christ, considering the enemies themselves shall say, God hath done great things V

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things for them: Kings shall lay their | Cap. 29. Crowns at Christs feet, and bring all their Rev. 21.24

glory to the Church.

And for every Christian, this may be a comfort, that though their light for a time may be eclipsed, yet it shall break forth. Davidat this time was accounted an enemie of the State, & had a world of falle imputations laid upon him. which hee was very sensible of; yet (wee see here) he knew at length God would bee the Salvation of his countenance.

But some (as Gideon) may object, if Object. God intend to be fo gracious, why is it thus with is?

The answer is, Salvation is Gods own Answ. worke, humbling and casting downe is his strange worke, whereby he comes to his owne worke. For, when hee intends to fave, he will seeme to destroy first: and when hee will justifie, he will condemne first: whom hee will revive, hee will kill first. Grace and goodnesse countenanced by God, have a native inbred Majesty in them, which maketh the face to shine, and borroweth not

Cap. 29.

its lustre from without, which God at length will have to appeare in its owne likenesse, howsoever malice may cast a vaile thereon, and disguise it for a time. And though wickednesse (as it is base borne, and a child of darknesse) may thelter it selfe under authority a while. yet it shall hide it selfe and runne into corners. The comfort of comforts is. that at that great day, (the day of all dayes) that day of the Revelation of the righteons Indgement of God; the righteous shall then shine as the Sunne in the firmament, then Christ will come to be glorious in his Saints, and will be the Salvation of the countenance of all his. Then all the workes of darknesse shall be driven out of countenance, and adjudged to the place from whence they came. In the meane time let us (with

David) support our selves with the

hopes of these times.

Dan.13.

CHAP.

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Cap. 30.

CHAP. XXX.

of God, our God, and of particular appli-

These words imply a speciall interest that the holy man had in God, (as his God) being the ground of all which was said before; both of the duty of trusting, and of praising, and of the salvation that hee expected from God. He is my God, therefore be not disquieted but trust him. He is my God, therefore hee will give mee matter to praise him, and will be the salvation of my countenance; God hath some special ones in the world, to whom he doth as it were

passe over himselse, and whose God he is by vertue of a more speciall cove-

mant; whence we have these excellent expressions. I will be your God, and you

hall be my people: I will be your Father, and you shall be my sonnes and daughters. Since the fall wee having lost our communion with God the chiefe good, our happinesse stands in recovering against

That Davids interest in God, was a speciall foundation of his trusting in God.

Jer.31.33.

fellowship

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Cap. 30.

fellowship with him. For this end wee were created, and for this redeemed, and for effecting of this, the Word and Sacraments are sanctified to us, yea, and for this end God himselfe (out of the bowels of his compassion) vouchsafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, founded upon Jesus Christ, and his satisfaction to divine justice; so that by Faith wee become one with him, and receive him, as offered of his Father to be all in all to us.

Why cbrist hath his name Im-

1 Pct.3.18

Hence it is, that CHRIST hath his name Immanuel, God with us Not onely because hee is God, and man too, (both natures meeting in one person) but because being God in our nature, he hath undertooke this office to bring God and us together. The maine end of Christs comming and suffering, was to reconcile, and to gather together in one; and (as Peter expresseth it) to bring man againe to God. Immanuel is the bond of this happy agreement, and appeares for ever in heaven to make it good. As the comfort hereof is great, so the foundation of it is sure and everlasting, God will

will be our God, so long as he is Christs God; and because hee is Christs God. Thus the Father of the saithfull, and all other holy men before Christ, apprehended God to be their God in the Messias to come. Christ was the ground of their interest. Hee was yesterday to them as well as to day to us. Hence it is that God is called the portion of his people, and they his jewels: he their onely rock and strong Tower, and they his peculiar ones.

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Well may we wonder that the great God should stoope so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinfull dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of Angels, a torment of devils, and glory of our nature and persons; and will be matter of admiration, and praising God untous for all eternity.

As God offereth himselfe to be ours in Christ (else durst we lay no claime to him) so there must be in us an appropriating grace of faith, to lay hold of I i 2

Cap. 30.

Heb.13. Pfa. 73.26. Mal.3. 25. Pfal.71.

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That there must be on our part an appropriating of God, as he tenders himselfe to be our God.

Cap. 30.

this offer. David faith here, My God. But by what spirit? by a spirit of faith, which looking to Gods offer, maketh it his owne whatsoever it layes hold of. God offereth himselfe in covenant, and Faith catcheth hold thereon presently. With a gracious offer of God, there goeth a gracious touch of his spiric to the foule, giving it fight and strength, whereby (being ayded by the same spi. rit)it layeth hold on God shewing himselfe in love. God saith to the soule, I am thy salvation, and the soule saith againe, Thou art my God. Faith is nothing else, but a spirituall eccho, returning that voice back againe, which God first speakes to the soule. For what acquaintance could the foule claime with fo glorious a Majesty, if he thould not first condescend so low, as to speake peace, and whisper secretly to the soule, that he is our loving God and Father, and mee his peculiar ones in Christ, that our sinnes are all pardoned, his justice fully satisfied, and our persons freely accepted in his deere Sonne. But to come more particularly to

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the words [My God] The words are Cap. 30. pregnant; in the wombe of them, all that is graciously & comfortably good is contained; they are the fpring head of all particular bleffings. All particular Relations and Titles that it pleaseth God to take upon him, have their strength from hence, that God is our God. More cannot be said, and lesse will not serve the turne. Whatfoever else we have, if we have not God; it will prove but an empty Cisterne at last. He is our proper element, every thing defires to live inits owne element, fishes in the Sea, Birds in the ayre; in this they are best preserved.

There is a greater strength in this [My God] then in any other Title, it is more then if he had said My King, or My Lord; these are words of soveraignty and wisdome; but this implies not onely infinite power, soveraignty, and wisdome, but likewise infinite bounty and provident care; so that when we are said to be Gods people, the meaning is, that wee are not onely such over whom God hath a power and com-

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mand.

God offers himselfe in particular to the believing soule by his spirit, therefore our faith must be particular. That which the Sacraments seale, is a peculiar interest in Christ; This is that which hath alwayes upheld the Saints of God, and that which is ever joyned with the life of Christ in us. The life that I live (saith Paul) is by the faith of the Sonne of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me. The spirit of faith is a spirit of application.

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Gal. 2. 20.

This is implyed in all the Articles of our faith; we believe God to be our Father, and Christ to be borne for us, that he dyed for us, and rose agains for our good, and now sits at the right hand of God, making requests for us in particular.

3. This is that which distinguishes the faith of a true Christian, from all hypocrites and cast-awayes whatsoever. Were it not for this word of possession [Mine] the devill might say the Creed to as good purpose as we; He beleeves there is a God and a Christ, but that which torments him is this, he

can fay [My] to never an Article of

faith.

4. A generall apprehension of Gods goodnesse and mercy may stand with desperation. Take away My from God, and take away God himselse in regard of comfort; what comfort was it for Adam, when he was shur out of Paradise to looke upon it after he had lost it? The more excellencies are in God, the more our griese if we have not our part in them: the very life blood of the

Cap. 30.

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Talle meum

Cap. 30.

the Gospell, lyes in a speciall application of particular mercy to our selves. All relations that God and Christ have taken upon them, imply a necessity of application; What if God be a rock of salvation if we doe not rest upon him? What if he be a foundation, and we doe not build on him? What if hee offers himselfe as a husband, if we will not accept of him, what availes it us? How can we rejoyce in the salvation of our soules, unlesse we can in particular say, I rejoyce in God my Saviour.

5. Without particular application, we can neither entertaine the love of God, nor returne love againe, by which meanes we lose all the comfort God intends us in his word, which of purpose was written for our solace and refreshment; Take away particular faith, and we let out all the spirits of cheerefull and thankfull obedience.

This possessive particle [My] hath place in all the golden chaine of our salvation. The first spring of all Gods claime to us as his is in his election of us; we were by grace his before we were;

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those that are his from that eternal love, he gives to Christ; this is hid in the breast of God, till he calls us out of the rest of the world into Comunion with Christ. In answering of which call (by faith) we become one with Christ, and so one with him. Afterwards in justification wee feele God experimentally to be reconciled unto us, whence arises jey and inward peace. And then upon further fanctification God delights in us ashis, bearing his owne image, and we from a likenesse to God, delight in him as ours in his Christ, and so this mutuall interest betwixt God and us, continues untill at last God becomes all in all unto us.

But how can a man that is not yet in the Object. hate of grace say with any comfort, My God ?

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Whilest a man regards iniquity in his Answ. beart without any remorse or dislike of the same, if he saith my God, his heart will give his tengue the lye, however in an outward profession, and opinion of others, hee may beare himselfe as if God were his, upon false grounds. For there

Cap. 30. there can be no more in a conclusion,

then it hath from the principle and premises out of which it is drawne. The principle (here) is, that God is the God of all that trust in him. Now if wee can make it good, that wee truly trust in God, we may safely conclude of comfort from him; for the more certaine clearing of which, try your selves by

the signes of trust delivered.

It is no easie matter to say in truth of heart [My God] the slesh will still la-

bour for supremacy, God should bee all in all untous, but this will not bee till these bodies of slesh (together with the body of sinne) bee laid aside. Hee that

sayes God is [my God] and doth not yeeld up himselfe unto God, raiseth a building without a foundation, layetha

claim without a title, and claimeth a title without an evidence, reckoning upon

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a bargain, without consent of the party

But if a man shall out of the fight and sense of sin, thirst after mercy in Christ, and call unto God for pardon, then God who (is a God hearing prayer and) delighteth

Pfal. 65.2.

lighteth to be knowne by the name of Cap. 30. mercifull, will bee ready to close and meet with the desire of such a soule, so farre as to give it leave to relye upon him for mercy, (and that without presumption) untill he further discovers himselfe graciously unto it; upon sense of which grace, the foule may bee encouraged to lay a farther claime unto God, having further acquaintance with him. Hence are those exhortations so oft in the Prophets, to turne unto the Lord our God, because upon our first resolution to turne unto God, wee shall finde him alwayes ready to answer those desires, that hee stirres up by his owne spirit in us.

Wee are not therefore to stay our turning unto God, till wee feele him, faying to our hearts, I am thy God, but when he prevents us by his grace, inabling us to desire grace, let us follow the worke begun, in the strength of what grace we have, and then God will further manisest himself in mercy to us

Yet God before we can make any thing towards him, lets into our hearts

Zach. 1.2.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 30.

hearts some few beames of mercy, thereby drawing us unto him, and reaching us out a hint to lay hold upon.

And as sinne causeth a distance betwixt God and us, so the guilt of sinne in the coscience, causes further strangenesse, insomuch that we dare not look up to heaven, till God open a little crevise to let in a little light of comfort (at least) into our foules, whereby we are by little and little drawne neerer to him. But this light at the first is so little, that in regard of the greater fense of sinne, and a larger desire of grace, the foule reckons the same as no light at all, in comparison of what it desires and seekes after. Yet the comfort is, that this dawning light will at length cleere up to a perfect day.

Thus we see how this claime of God to be our God, is still in growth untill sull assurance, and that there is a great distance betwixt the first ast of faith in cleaving to God, offering himselfe in Christ to be ours, and betweene the last fruit of faith, the cleere and comfortable feeling, that God is our God indeed.

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Wee first by faith apply our selves to Cap. 30. God, and then apply God to us, to be ours: The first is the conflicting exercise of faith, the last is the triumph of faith; therefore faith properly is not affurance. And to comfort us the more, the promises are specially made to the act of faith, fuller assurance is the reward of faith.

If God hath not chosen mee in Christ to be his, what ground have I to trust in him? I may cast away my selfe upon a vaine confidence.

We have no ground (at first) to trou- Answ. ble our selves about Gods election. Secret things belong to God; Gods revealed will is, That all that beleeve in Christ Shall not perish. It is my duty therefore knowing this, to believe, by doing whereof, I put that question, whether God be mine or no? out of all question; for all that beleeve in Christ, are Christs, and all that are Christs are Gods. It is not my duty to look to Gods secret counsell, but to his open offer, invitation, and command, and thereupon to adventure my soule. And this adven-

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Ioh . 3. 15.

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Cap. 30.

DNis polli. cetur fereti proventum; naviganti portum; militanti victoriam? 7deo Navigantes vitam ven tis credunt, de. Salvian. Ideo terris frumenta credimus ut cum usuris credita recipiamus.

ture of faith will bring at length a rich returne unto us. In warre men will adventure their lives, because they thinke some will escape, and why not they? In traffique beyond the Seas many adventure great estates, because some grow rich by a good returne, though many miscarry. The husbandman adventures his feed, though sometime the yeare proves so bad, that he never sees it more. And thall not we make a spirituall adventure in casting our selves upon God, when wee have so good a warrant as his command, and so good an encouragement as his promise, that hee will not faile those that rely on him? God bids us draw neere to him, and heer will dram neere to us. Whilest wee in Gods owne wayes draw neere to him, and labour to entertain good thoughts of him, hee will delight to shew him. selfe favourably unto us. Whilest we are striving against an unbeleeving heart, he wil come in and help us, and so fresh light will come in.

Pretend not thy unworthinesse and inability, to keepe thee off from God,

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for this is the way to keep thee lo still, Cap. 30 ifany thing help us, it must be God, and if ever hee help us, it must be by casting our selves upon him, for then hee will reach out himselfe unto us in the promise of mercy to pardon our sinne, and in the promise of grace to fanctifie our natures. It was a good resolution of the Lepers, If we enter into the City, the famine is there, and we shall dre (say they) if we fit fill, we shall die also: Let us therefore fall into the hoast of Asyrians, if they (ave us, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall but dye: So we should reason, if wee sit fill under the load of our fin wee shall die, if we put our selves into the hands of Christ, if he save us we shall live, if hee fave us not, wee shall but die. Nay furely, he will not suffer us to die. Did ever Christ thrust any back from him, that put themselves upon him? Unlesse it were by that meanes to draw them the neerer unto him, as we see in the woman of Canaan. His denyall was but to increase her importunity. We should therefore doe as she did, gather all arguments to help our faith. Suppose 1 Kk am

2 Rez.7.4.

Omnia in rebus humanis Ales futur orum agunt.

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Cap. 30.

am a dogge (faith shee) yet I am one of the family, and therefore have right to the crummes that fall. So Lord, I have beene a sinner, yet I am thy creature; and not onely fo, but fuch a creature as thou hast set over the rest of the works of thy hands; and not onely so, but one whom thou hast admitted into thy Church by Baptisme, whereby thou wouldst binde me to give my selfe unto thee before hand, and more then this thou hast brought me under the means, and therein hast shewed thy will concerning my turning towards thee. Thou hast not onely offered me conditions of peace, but wooed me by thy Ministers to give up my selfe unto thee, as thine in thy Christ. Therefore I dare not suspect thy good meaning towards me, or question thy intendment, but resolve to take thy counsell, and put my selfe upon thy mercy. I cannot thinke if thou hadst meant to cast me away, and not to owne mee for thine, thou wouldst ever have kindled these desires in me. But it is not this state I rest in, my purpose is to wait upon thee, untill

untill thou dost manifest thy selfe tarther unto me. It is not common fayours that will content me (though I be unworthy of these) because I heare of choyfe bleffings towards thy chofen people, that thou entrest into a peculiar covenant withall, sure mercies, and such as accompany salvation. These be the favours I waite for at thy hand. O visite me with the salvation of thy chosen. Oremember mee with the favour of thy people, that I may see the good of thy chosen. Whilest the soule is thus exercikd, more sweetnesse falls upon the will and affections, whereby they are drawne fill neerer unto God. The foule is in a getting and a thriving condition: For God delights to shew himselfe gracious to those that strive to be well perswaded of him, concerning his readineffe othew mercy to all that look towards him in Christ. In worldly things, how be wee cherish hopes upon little rounds? if there shineth never so little lope of gaine or preferment, wee make ther it. Why then should we for sake browne mercy, (which God offers to Kk 2

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Cap. 30.

Ifay 55.3.

PC 106 4.5

word of comfort, that fell from the mouth of a cruell King: Shall not grace teach Gods children to lye in wait fol any token that hee shall shew for good

to them? How should we stretch forth

the armes of our faith to him, tha

stretcheth out his armes all the day lon

to a rebellious people: God will never shu

his bosome against those that in a

humble obedience flye unto him: we

cannot conceive too graciously of God

Can wee have a fairer offer, then fo

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Esay 65.2.

Cap. 31.

God in Christ to make over himselse unto us? which is more then if hee should make over a thousand worlds; Therefore our chiese care should bee, first by faith to make this good, and then to make it usefull unto us, by living upon it as our chiesest portion; which wee shall doe, 1. By proving God to be our God in particular; 2. By improving of it in all the passages of our lives.

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CHAP. XXXI.

Meanes of proving and evidencing to our soules, that God is our God.

Now we prove it to our soules, that God is ours, when we take him at his offer; when wee bring nothing but a sense of our owne emptinesse with us, and a good conceit of his faithfulnesse andability to doe us good; when we answer God in the particular passages of salvation, which we cannot doe, till he begins first unto us. Therefore if we be Gods, it is a certaine signe that Kk2 God

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Cap. 31.

God is ours. If we chuse him, wee may conclude he hathchosen us first. If wee love him, we may know that he hath lo. ved us first. If we apprehend him, it is because he hath apprehended us first. Whatfoever affection we shew to God. it is but a reflection of his first to us. If cold and dark bodies have light and heat in them, it is because the Sun hath shined upon them first. Mary answers not Rabboni, till Christ said Mary to her. If we say to God I am thine, it is because he hath first said unto us, thou art mine; after which the voice of the faithfull soule is, I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine. We may know Gods minde to us in heaven, by the returne of our hearts upwards againe to him: Onely as the reflected beames are weaker then the direct, so our affections in their returne to God, are farre weaker then his love falling upon us. God will be to us what foever wee make him by

our faith to be; when by grace we answer his condition of trusting, then he

2. Wee may know God to be [our

God

becomes ours toule for our good.

I Iohn 20.
16.
Dicat anima fecura
dicat, Deus
meus es tu,
qui dicit ani ne nostra
Salus tua
ego sum.
Aug.in

Pfal. 132.

Cant. 6.3.

2.

God] when wee pitch and plant all our | Cap. 31. happinesse in him, when the desires of our soules are towards him, and wee place all our contentment in him. As this word [my] is a terme of appropriation springing from a speciall faith, so it is a word of love and peculiar affection, thewing that the foule doth repose and rest it selfe quietly and securely upon God. Thus David proves God to bee his God, by early seeking of him, by thir. sting, and longing after his presence, and that upon good reason, because Gods loving kindnesse was better to him then life; This he knew would satisfie his soule as with marrow and fatuesse. So S. Paul proved Christ to be his Lord, by account- Phil.3.8. ing all things else as dung and droffe in comparison of him.

Then we make God our God, and fet a Crowne of Majesty upon his head, when we fet up a Throne for him in our hearts, where selfe-love before had fet up the creature above him; when the heart is so unloosed from the world, that it is ready to part with any thing for Gods sake, giving him now the

Kk4 **fupremacy**

Pfal 63.1, 2,3. &c.

Cap. 31.

supremacy in our hearts, and bringing downe every high thought in captivity to him; making him our truft, our love, our joy, our delight, our feare, our all; and whatloever we esteem or affect elle, to esteem and affect it under him, in him, and for him; When we cleave to him above all, depending upon him as our chiefe good, and contenting our felves in him, as all-sufficient to give our soules fit and full satisfaction. When we refigne up our selves to his gracious government, to doe and fuffer what he will, offering our felves and all our spirituall fervices as facrifices to him. When faith brings God into the soule as ours, we not onely love him, but love him dearely, making it appeare, that when wee are at good tearmes with God, we are at a point for other things. How many are there that will adventure the losse of the love of God, for a thing of nothing? and redeeme the favour of men with the losse of Gods. Certaineit is whatsoever we esteeme, or affect most, that whatsoever it be in it selfe, yet we make it our God. The best

Amor tuus, Deus tuus. best of us all may take shame to our Cap. 31. selves herein, in that we doe not give God his due place in us, but set up some Idell or other in our hearts above him.

When the foule can without hypocrifie fay [My God] it ingageth us to universall and unlimited obedience, we shall be ambitious of doing that which may be acceptable and well pleasing to him; and therefore this is prefixed as a ground before the Commandements, enforcing obedience; I am the Lord thy God, therefore thou Shalt have no other Gods before me; whomsoever else wee obey, it must be in the Lord, because wee fee a beam of Gods authority in them; and it is no prejudice to any inferiour authority, to preferre Gods authority before it in case of difference one from the other.

When we know we are a peculiar people, wee cannot but bee Zealous of good workes. If I be a Father, where is mine bonour? Speciall relations are speciall enforcements to duty.

4. The pirit of God which knowes the deep things of God, and the depths

Exod.20.

Nemini fit injuria cui præponitur Deus.

Tit.2.14.

Mal.1.6.

knowes what is in man, but the spirit of man, so none knowes what love God beares to those that are his, but the spirit of God in his: All the light in the world cannot discover the Sunne unto

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us, onely it discoversit selfe by its own beames. So all the Angels and Saints in heaven cannot discover to our soules the love that is in the breast of God towards us, but onely the spirit of God, which sheds it into our bearts. The spirit onely teaches this language to say my God. It is insused onely into sanctified hearts, and therefore oft-times meane men enjoy it, when great, mise, and learned persons are strangers to it.

5. The spirit when it witnesseth this to us, is called the spirit of adoption, and hath alwayes accompanying of it a spirit of supplication, whereby with a samiliar, yet reverent boldnesse, we lay open our hearts to God as to a deere Father; All others are strangers to this heavenly intercourse. In straits they run to their friends and carnall shifts, whereas an heire of heaven runs to his Father and tells him of all.

6. Those that are Gods, are known to be his, by speciall love-tokens, that he bestowes upon them. As 1. the speciall graces of his spirit. Princes children are knowne by their costly jewels,

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Cap. 31.

Rom.5.5.

Mat. 1 1.25

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Special favours shew God to be our God.

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Cap. 31.

and rich ornaments. It is not common gifts, and glorious parts that fet a character upon us to be Gods, but grace to use those gifts, in humility and love, to the glory of the giver.

2.

2. There is in them a sutablenesse and connaturalnesse of heart to all that is spirituall, to whatsoever hath Gods stampe upon it, as his truth and his children, and that because they are his. By this likenesse of disposition, wee are fashioned to a communion with him: Can two walke together and not be agreed ? It is a certaine evidence that we are Gods in Christ, if the spirit of God hath wrought in us any impression like unto Christ, who is the image of his Father, both Christs looking upon us, and our looking upon Christ by faith (as ours) hath a transforming and conforming power.

3.

3. Spirituall comforts in distresse, such as the world can neither give, nor take away, shew that God lookes upon the soules of his with another eye, then he beholdeth others. He sends a secret messenger that reports his peculiar love

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to their hearts. He knowes their soules, and feeds them with his hidden Manna; the inward peace they feele, is not in freedome from trouble, but in freenesse with God in the midst of trouble.

4. Seasonable and sanctified corrections wherby we are kept from being led away by the errour of the wicked, shew Gods fatherly care over us as his. Who will trouble himselfe in correcting another mans childe? yet we ostner complaine of the smart wee feele, then thinke of the tender heart and hand that smites us, untill our spirits be subdued, and then we reape the quiet fruit of righteousnesse. Where crosses worke together for the best, we may know that we love God, and are loved of him. Thriving in a sinfull course, is a black marke of one that is not Gods.

7. Then wee make it appears that God is our God, when wee side with him, and are for him and his cause in ill times. When God seems to cry out unto us, who is on my side, who? Then if wee can say as those in Esay, whereof one sayes, I am the Lords, and another calls himselfe

Cap. 31.

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Rom. 8.28.

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2 Reg 9.32

Cap. 31. Esay 44. 6.

Hcb.11.16

himselfe by the name of Jacob, and another subscribes with his hand unto the Lord, its a bleffed figne. Thus the Pa. triarchs, and Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs, were not ashamed of God, and God was not ashamed to own the. Provided that this boldnesse for God proceed not onely from a conviction of the judgement, but from spirituall experience of the goodnesse of the cause, whereby we can justifie in heart what we justifie in words. Otherwise men may contend for that with others, which they have no interest in them. felves. The life must witnesse for God, as well as the tongue; it is oft easier for corrupt nature to part with life, then with luft.

This siding with God, is with a separation from whatsoever is contrary. God useth this as an argument to come out of Babylon, because me are his people, Come out of her My people. Religion is nothing else, but a gathering and a binding of the soule close to God; that sire which gathers together the gold, separates the drosse. Nature drawes out that

Rev. 18.4.

that which is wholesome in meates, Cap. 31. and severs the contrary. The good that is to be had by God, is by cleaving to him and him onely. God loves an ingenuous and full protestation, if called to it. It shewes the coldnesse of the times whe there is not heat enough of zeale to separate from a contrary faith. God is a jealous God; and so wee shall finde him at last. When the day of severing comes, then they that have stood for him, shall not onely be his, but his treasure and his jewels.

There is none of us all, but may some time or other fall into such a great extremity, that when wee looke about us, we shall finde none to help us: at which time we shall throughly know, what it is to have comfort from heaven, and a God to goe unto. there be any thing in the world worth labouring for, it is the getting found evidence to our foules that God is ours. What madnesse is it to spend all our labour, to possesse our selves of the Ciferne, when the fountaine is offered to us? O beloved, the whole world can-

not

Cap. 31.

not weigh against this one comfort, that God is ours. All things laid in the other ballance, would be too light. A Moath may corrupt, a theefe may take away that we have here, but who can take our God away? Though God doth convey some comfort to us by these things, yet when they are gone, he reserves the comfort in himself still, and can convey that, and more in a purer and sweeter way, where hee plants the grace of faith to fetchit from him. Why then should we weaken our interest in God, for any thing this earth affords? What unworthy wretches are those, that to please a finfull man, or to feede a base lust, or to yeeld to a wicked custome, will (as much as in them lyeth) lose their interest in God? Such little consider what an excellent priviledge it is to have a fure refuge to flye unto in time of trouble. God wants not wayes to maintaine his, without being beholding to the devill. He hath all help hid in himselfe, and will then most shew it, when it shall make most for his owne glory. If God be ours, it is a **fhame**

shame to bee beholding to the devill, Cap. 31. that ever it should bee said Sathan by base courses hath made us rich. God thinkes any outward thing too meane for his children, severed from himselfe, therefore he gives his Son the expresse image of himselfe unto them. For which cause David when he had even studied to reckon up the number of Gods choise bleffings, concludes with advancing of this above all, rea rather happy Phraging. are they whose God is the Lord. If this will not satisfie the soule, what can? Labour therefore to bring thy soule to this point with God, Lord if then feeft it fit, take away all from me, fo thou leavest me thy felfe, whom have I in beaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I defire in comparison of thee.

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Pfal 23025.

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CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of improving our evidences for comfort in severall passages of our lives.

We ought to branch out the feverall excellencies in God for our speciall uses.

THat wee lose not any measure of comfort in this fo sweet a priviledge, wee must labour for skill to improve, & implead the same in the severall passages and occasions of our lives. and let it appeare in the retaile, that what soever is in God is mine : If I am in a perplexed condition, his wisdome is mine : If in great danger, his power is mine: If I lie fighing under the burthen of sime, his grace is mine : If in any want, his all-sufficiency is mine. My God (faith S. Paul) will supply all your wants. If in any danger, I am thine Lord, fave me, I am thine, the price of thy Sonnes blood, let me not be lost, thou hast given me the earnest of thy Spirit, and fet thy feale upon me, for thy own, let me neither lose my bargaine, nor thou thine. What is Religion it selfe but a spirituall bond? whereby the soule is tyed to God as its owne, and then

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Phil.4.19

then fingles out of God what soever is needfull for any occasion: and so binds God with his owne covenant and promile. Lord thou hast made thy selfe to bee wine, therefore now shew thy selfe so, and be axalted in thy wisdome, goodnesse, and power, for my defence. Towalke comfortably in my Christian course, I need much grace, supply me out of thy rich store. I need wisdome to goe in and out inoffensively before others, furnish me with thy firit. I need patience and comfort, thou that art the God of all consolation, bestow it on me.

In time of desertion put Christ betwixt God and thy foule, and learne to appeale from God out of Christ, to God in Christ. Lord looke upon my Saviour, that is neere unto thee as thy Sonne, neere to meas my Brother, and now intercedes at thy right hand for me; though I have finned, yet he hath luffered, and thed his precious blood to make my peace. When we are in any trouble, let us still wait on him, and lye at his feet, and never let him goe, till he cast a gracious looke upon us.

So, if we be to deale with God, for the

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the Church abroad, we may alleadge unto him that whatsoever provocations
are therein, and deformity in regard of
abuses and scandals: yet it is his Church,
his people, his inheritance, his name is
called upon in it, and the enemies of it
are his enemies. God hath engaged
himselfe to the friends of the Church,
that they shall prosper that love it, and
therefore we may with a holy boldnesse
presse him, for a blessing upon the
same.

Pfal.122.6

Iohn 17.

So for our children and posterity, we may encline God to respect them, because they are under his covenant, who hath promised to be our God, and the God of our seed; Thine they were, thou gavest them me; all that I have is thine, these are those children which thou of thy rich grace hast given me. They are thine, more then mine. I am but a meanes under thee to bring them into the world, and to been Nurse unto thy children; Take care therefore of thine owne children I beseech thee (especially) when I can take no care of them my selfe, thou sumberest not, thou dyest not, I must.

Flesh

Flesh and blood think nothing is ca. red for, but what it feeth cared for by it selfe. It hath no eyes to see a guard of Providence, a guard of Angells. It takes no knowledge that that is best cared for, that God cares for. Those that have God for their God, have enlarged hearts as they have enlarged comforts. They have an everlasting spring that supplies them in all wants, refreshes them in all troubles, and then runnes most clearely and freshly, when all other streames in the world, are dryed and stopt up. Were we skilfull in the art of faith, to improve so great an interest, what in the world could much dismay us? faith will set God against all.

It should fill our hearts with an holy indignation against our selves, if either we rest in a condition, wherein we cannot truly say God is [Our God] or (if when we can in some sincerity of heart fay this) that we make no better advantage thereby, and maintaine not our selves answerable to such a condition. What a shame is it for a Noble mans fonne

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Cap. 32.

fonne to live like a beggar? for a great rich man, to live like a poore pealant? to familh at a banquet? to fall when we have so many stayes to lay hold on? Whereas if we could make this cleare to out soules, that God is vars, and then take up our thoughts, with the great riches wee have in him, laid open in Christ, and in the promises, wee need trouble our selves about nothing, but onely get a large vessell of faith, to receive what is offered, nay enforced upon us.

When we can say, God is our God, it is more then if we could say, heaven is mine; or whatever good the creature affords, is mine. Alas, what is all this, to be able to say, God is mine, who hath in him the sweetnes of all these things, and infinite more? If God bee ours, goodnesse it selfe is ours. If hee be not ours, though we had all things else, yet ere long nothing would be ours. What a wondrous comfort is this, that God hath put himselfe over to be ours? That a believing soul may say with as great considerce (and greater too) that God

is his, then he can say his house is his, Cap. 32. his treasure is his, his friends are his? Nothing is so much ours as God is ours, because by his being ours in covenant, all other things become ours: And if Godbe once ours, well may we trust in him. God and ours joyned together, make up the full comfort of a Christian. [God] there is all to be had; but what is that to me, unlesse he be my God? Al-Sufficiency with propriety, fully stayesh the soule.

David was now banished from the Sanctuary, from his friends, habitation, and former comforts; but was he banished from his God? No, God was his God still. When riches, and friends, and life it selfe, cease to be ours, yet Godnever loseth bis right in us, nor wee our interest in him. This comfort that God is ours, reacheth unto the resurrection of our bodies, and to life everlasting. God is the God of Abraham, (and so of every true beleever) even when his body is turned into dust. Hence it is that the loving kindnesse of the Lord, is better then life, because when life departs, yet wee

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Cap. 32. live for ever in him. When Mofes faw the people drop away fo fast in the wildernesse, and wither like graffe, thou art our foundation (faith he) from one generation to another: thou art God from everlasting to everlasting. When wee leave the world, and are no more feene here, yet we have a dwelling place in God for ever. God is ours from everlasting in election, and to everlasting in glory, protecting us here, and glorifying us hereafter. David that claimed God to be his God is gone, but Davids God is alive. And David himselfe (though bis flesh sce corruption yet) is alive in his God Mill.

That which is faid of wily persons that are full of fetches, and windings, and turnings in the world, that such will never breake, may much more truly bee said of a right godly man, that hath but one grand policie, to secure him in all dangers, which is to runne to his God, as to his tower of offence and' defence: such a one will never bee at a desperate losse so long as God hath any credit, because hee never faileth those that

that flye unto him, and that because Cap. 32. his mercy and truth never fayles. The very lame and the blinde, the most shiftlesse creatures when they had gotten the strong hold of Syon, thought then they might securely scorne David and his hoast, because though they were weak in themselves, yet their hold was strong; but wee see their hold failed them at length, which a Christians will never doe.

But God seemes to have small care of Object. these that are his in the world, these who beleeve themselves to be his jewels, are counted the off-scouring of the world,

and most despised.

We must know that such have a glo- Infin. rious life in God, but it is hidden with Colostia. Christ in God, from the eyes of the world, and sometimes from their owne; here they are hidden under infirmities, afflictions, and disgraces, but yet never so hidden, but that God sometimes lets downe a beame of comfort and strength, which they would not lose to be freed from their present condition, though never fo grievous. God comes

s Sam.s.

are at our wits end, as if God were not

where he was. Oh consider, if wee had

all and had not God, wee had nothing: If we have nothing, and have God, we

have enough, for wee have him that

hath all, and more then all at his com-

mand. If wee had all other comforts

that our hearts can'desire, yet if God

withdraw himselfe, what remaines but a curse and emptinesse? What makes be

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Cap. 32.

Gen.21.19

heaven but the presence of God? And Cap. 32. what makes hel but the absence of God? Let God be in any condition, though never so ill, yet it is comfortable, and usually wee finde more of God in trouble, then when we are out of trouble; the comforts of Religion never come till other faile. Cordials are kept for faintings. When a curtaine and a vaile is drawne betwixt us and the creature, then our eyes are onely upward to God, and hee is more clearely feene

of no. In the division of things, Go D bequeaths himselfe to those that are his, for their portion, as the best portion he can give them. There are many goodly things in the world, but none of these are a Christians portion, there is in him to supply all good, and remove all ill, untill the time come that we stand in need of no other good. It is our chief wisdome to know him, our bolinesse to love him, our happinesse to enjoy him. There is in him to be had, what soever can cruly make us happy. Wee goe to our treasure, and our portion in all our wants,

God, the Saints portion,

Pfal.71.26.

Cap. 32. wants, we live by it, and value our felves by it. God is such a portion, that the more wee spend on him, the more wee may. Our strength may faile, and our heart may faile, but God is our partion for ever. Every thing else teaches us by the vanity and vexation wee find in them. that our happinesse is not in them, they send us to God; they may make us worse, but better they cannot. Our nature is above them, and ordained for a greater good; they can goe but along with us for a while, and their end swallowes up all the comfort of their beginnings, as Pharaobes leane Kine swallowed up the far. If we have no better portion here then these things, we are like to have hell for our portion hereafter. What a shame will it be hereafter when we are stript of all, that it should be said, Loe this is the man, that tooke not God for his portion. If God be once ours, he goes for ever along with us, and when earth will hold us no longer, heaven shall. Who that hath his senses about him, would perish for want of water, when there is a fountaine by him?

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him? or for hunger that is at a feast? God alone is a rich portion: O then let us labour for a large faith, as we have a large object; If we had a thousand times more faith, wee should have a thousand times more increase of Gods blessings. When the Prophet came to the widdowes bouse, as many vessels as shee had were filled with syle; wee are straitned in our owne faith, but not straitned in our God. It fals out oft in this world, that Gods people are like Ifrael at the red fea, invironed with dangers on all fides: What course have weethen to take, but onely to looke up and wait for the falvation of our God? This is a breaft full of consolation, let us teach our hearts to fuck, and draw comfort from hence.

Is God our God, and will he suffer any thing to befall us for our hurt? Will he lay any more upon us, then he gives us strength to beare? Will hee suffer any wind to blow upon us, but for good? Doth he not set us before his sace? Will a Father or Mother suffer a child to be wronged in their presence, if they can

help

Cap. 32.

1 Reg. 17-

520	The Soules Conflict.
Cap. 32.	help it? Will a friend suffer his friend to be injured, if he may redresse him? And
	will God that hath put these affections into Parents and friends, neglect the
	care of those hee hath taken so neere unto himselfe? No surely, his eyes are
	open to looke upon their condition;
Mal.3.16.	his eares are open to their prayers; a booke of remembrance is written of all
	their good desires, speeches, and acti-
	ons; hee hath bottles for all their teares, their very fighs are not hid from him,
T6	he hath written them upon the palmes of his hands, and cannot but continually
11ay 40.16	looke upon them. Oh let us prize the
	favour of so good a God, who though he dwels on high, yet will regard things
	To low, and not neglect the meane estate
	of any; Nay, especially, delights to be called the comforter of his Elect, and the
	God of those that are in misery, and have none to flye unto but himselfe.
	But wee must know that God onely
	thus graciously visits his owne children, he visits with his choysest favours those
	onely that feare his name. As for those
	that either secretly undermine, or openly
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sat we he felf tur openly oppose the cause, and Church Cap. 32of God, and joyne with his enemies; fuch as favour not the things of God, but commit spirituall Idolatry, and Adultery with Gods enemies, the world, and the devill; God will answer these, as once he did the Ifraelites, (when in their necessity they would have forced acquaintance upon him) Goe to the gods whom you have ferved, to the great men whose persons you have obeyed for advantage? to your riches, to your pleafure, which you have loved more then God or goodnesser you would not lose a base custome, an outh, a superfluity, a thing of nothing for me, therefore I will not owne you now. Such men are more impudent then the devil himself, that will claim acquaintance with God at last, when they have caried themselves as his enemies all their dayes. Sathan could tell-Paul and Sylas, they were the fervants of the living God, but he would not make that plea for himfelfe, knowing that he was a curfed creature.

Miserable then is their condition who

Ridges 10.

Cap. 52.

who live in the world, (nay in the Church) without God. Such are in a worse estate then Pagans and Iews; for living in the house of God, they are frangers from God, and from the covenant of grace; usurping the name of Christians, having indeed nothing to doe with Christ.

Some of these like spirituall vagabonds, as Cain, excommunicate themselves from Gods presence in the use of the meanes; or rather like devils, that will have nothing to doe with God, because they are loath to be tormented before their time; they thinke every good Sermon, an arraigning of them, and therefore keep out of reach.

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Others will present themselves under the meanes, and cary some savour away with them of what they heare, but it is onely till they meete with the next temptation, unto which they yeeld themselves presently slaves. These shrowd themselves under a generall profession, as they did, who called themselves senses, and were nothing lesse. But alas, an empty title, will bring

bring an empty comfort at last. It was Cap. 32. cold comfort to the rich man in flames. that Abraham called him sonne. Or to Indas, that Christ called him friend. Or to the rebellious temes, that God stiles them his people. Such as our protession is, such will our comfort be. True profession of Religion, is another thing. then most men take it to be; it is made up of the outward duty, and the inward man too, which is indeed the life and foule of all. What the heart doth not in Religion, is not done.

God cares for no retainers, that will onely weare his livery, but serve themselves. What hast thou to doe to take his name into thy mouth, and hatest to be reformed? Saul lived in the bosome of the Church, yet (being a cruell Tyrant) when he was in a desperate plunge, his outward profession did him no good. And therefore when he was invironed with his enemies, he uttered this dolefull complaint, God hath forfaken mee, i Sam. 18. and the Philistims are upon me : A pittifull case; yet so will it be with all those that rest in an outward profession, think-

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Luke 16.

Duod con non facit non fit.

Pfal. so.

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Cap. 33.

ing it enough to complement with God, when their hearts are not right within them. Such will at length bee forced to cry, Sicknesse is upon mee, death is upon me, bell is before me, and God hath forsaken me. I would none of God heretofore, Now God will have none of me. When David himselfe had offended God by numbring the people, then God counted him but plaine David, Goe and say to David, &c. whereas before when hee purposed to build a Temple, then goe tell my servant David. When the Israelites had fer up an Idoll, then God Fathers them on Moles, THY people which thou hast brought out of Egypt, he would not owne them as at other times, then; they are My people still whilest they keep covenant. No care, no present comfort in this neere relati-

The price of the Pearl is not known till all else be sold, and we see the necessary use of it. So the worth of God in Christ is never discerned, till we see our lost and undone condition without him, till conscience flyes in our faces,

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2 Sam. 34. 12.

2 Sam. 7.5

Exod.32.7

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and dragge us to the brink of hell; then Cap. 32. if ever we taste how good the Lord is, wee will say, Bleffed is the people whose God is the Lord. Heretofore I have heard of his loving kindnesse, but that is not a thousand part of what I see and feele. The joy I now appreheud is unutterable, unconceiveable.

Oh then when we have gotten our soules possest of God, let our study be. to preserve our selves in his love, to walke close with him, that he may delight to abide with us, and never forfake us. How basely doth the Scripture speak of what soever stands in our way? it makes nothing of them. What is man, but vanity, and leffe then vanity? All nations, but as a drop of the bucket, as the dust of a ballance; things not at all considerable. Flesh lookes upon them as through a multiplying glasse, making them greater then they are; but faith (as God doth) fees them as nothing.

This is such a bleffed condition, as may well challenge all our diligence in labouring to be affured of it; neither is it to bee attained or maintained with-

Ifay 40.15

What preferves the tenfe of Gods favour.

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out the strength and prime of our care. I speake especially of, and in regard of the sense and comfort of it. For the sense of Gods favour will not bee kept, without keeping him in our best affections above all things in the world, without keeping of our hearts alwayes close and neere to him, which cannot bee without keeping a most narrow watch over our loofe and unsetled hearts, that are ready to stray from God, and fall to the creature. It cannot be kept without exact and circumspect walking, without constant self-deniall, without a continuall preparation of spirit, to want and forfake any thing that God feeth fit to take from us.

Our pains cannot bee fpent to better purpose, then in crossing of our selves for God.

But what of all this? Can we crosse our selves, or spend our labours to better purpose? one sweet beam of Gods countenance will requite all this. We beat not the ayre, we plow not in the sand, neither sowe in a barren soile, God is no barren wildernesse. Nay, hee never shewes so much of himselfe, as in suffering, and parting with any thing for him, and denying our selves of that, which

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which wee thinke stands not with his will. Great persons require great observance. We can deny our selves, and have mens persons in great admiration, for hope of some advantage; and is any more willing and more able to advance us then the great al-sufficient God? A Christian indeed, undergoes more troubles, takes more paines (especially with his owne heart) then others doe. But what are these to his gaines? What returne so rich, as trading with God? What comforts so great, as these that are fetched from the fountaine? One day spent in enjoying the light of Gods countenance, is sweeter then a thoufand without it. Wee see here, when David was not onely that out from all comforts, but lay under many grievances, what a fruitfull use he makes of this, that God was his God. It upholdeth his dejected, it stilleth his unquiet foule : it leadeth him to the rock that was higher then be, and there stayeth him. It filleth him with comfortable hopes of better times to come. It fets him above himselfe, and all troubles and feares Therewhatfoever. Mm3

Therefore waite still in the use of meanes till God shine upon thee; yea, though wee know our sinnes in Christ are pardoned, yet there is something more that a gracious heart waites for, that is, a good looke from God, a further enlargement of heart, and an establishing in grace. It was not enough for David to have his sinnes pardoned, but to recover the joy of Salvation, and freedome of spirit. Therefore the foul should alwayes be in a waiting condition, even untill it bee filled with the fulnesse of God, as much as it is capable of. Neither is it quiet alone, or comfort alone, that the foule longs after, no, nor the favour of God alone, but a gracious heart to walke worthy of God. It rests not whilest any thing remaines, that may breed the least strangenesse betwixt God and us.

Pfal.sr.

CHAP.

Cap. 33.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of experience, and Faith, and how to wait on God comfortably. Helps thereto.

[My God.]

Hele words further imply a speciall experience, that Davids soule had felt of the goodnesse of God, hee had found God distilling the comfort of his goodnesse and truth through the promises, and he knew he should finde God againe the same he was, if hee put him in minde of his former gracious dealing. His soule knew right well, how good God was, and he could seal to those truths he had found comfort by, therefore he thus speakes to his soule, My soule, what my soule, that hast found God so good, so oft, so many wayes, thon My soule to be discouraged, having God, and My God, with whom I have taken so much sweet counsell, and felt fo much comfort from, and found alwayes heretofore to sticke so close unto me? Why shouldst thou now bee in fuch Mm4

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Cap. 33. Such a case, as if God and thou had beene strangers one to another. If we could treasure up experiments, the former part of our life, would come into help the latter, and the longer we live, the richer in faith we should be. Even as in victories, every former overthrow of an enemy, helps to obtaine a succeeding victory. The use of a sanctified memory, is to lose nothing that may help in time of need. Hee had need be a well tryed, and a known friend, upon whom wee lay all our falvation and comfort.

God to be trufted though never tryed.

We ought to trust God upon other grounds, though wee had never tryed him: but when hee helps our faith by former experience, this should strengthen our confidence, and shore up our spirits, and put us on to goe more cheerefully to God, as to a tried friend. If we were well read in the story of our owne lives, wee might have a divinity of our owne, drawn out of the observation of Gods particular dealing towards us; we might fay this & this truth, I dare venture upon, I have found it true,

true, I dare build all my happinesse up- | Cap. 33. on it. As Paul, I know whom I have trusted, I have tryed him, he never yet failed me. I am not now to learn how faithfull he is to those that are his. Every new experience is a new knowledge of God, and should fit us for new encounters. If we have been good in former times, God remembers the kindnesse of our ler.2.2. youth: we should therefore remember the kindnesse of God even from our youth. Evidence of what we have felt, helps our faith in that, which for the present we feele not.

Though it bee one thing to live by faith, and another thing to live by fight, yet the more wee see, and feele, and taste of God, the more we shall be led to rely on him, for that which as yet we neither see nor feele: Because thou hast Pfal. 63.7. been my helper (saith David) therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoyce. The time was Lord, when thou shewedst thy selfe a gracious Father to me, and thou art unchangeable in thy nature, in thy love, and in thy gifts.

Yea, when there is no present evidence.

Cap. 33.

evidence, but God shewes himselfe as contrary to us, yet a former taste of Gods goodnesse will enable to lay claime unto him still. Gods concealing of himselfe is but a wise discipline for a time, untill we be enabled to beare the full revealing of himselfe unto us for ever. In the meane time, though we have some sight and feeling of God, yet our constant living is not by it: the evidence of that we see not, is that which more constantly upholds the soule, then the evidence of any thing we see or feele.

Yea, though our experience by reafon of our not minding of it in trouble, seemes many times to stand us in no stead, but we fare as if God had never looked in mercy upon us: Yet (even here) some vertue remaines of former sense, which with the present spirit of faith, helps us to looke upon God as ours. As wee have a present strength from food received, and digested before; vessels are something the better for that liquor they keep not, but runs

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But if experience should wholly fail, there is such a divine power in faith, as a very little beame of it, having noother help then a naked promise, will uphold the foule; howfoever we must neglect no help, for God oft suspends his comfort, till wee have fearched all our helps. Though we see no light, yet we ought to fearch al crevises for light, and rejoyce in the least beam of light. that we may see day by. It is the nature of true faith, to fearch and pry into every corner; and if after all nothing appeares, then it casts it selfe upon God, as in the first conversion, when it had nothing to looke upon, but the offer of free mercy. If at that time without former experience, wee did trust God. Why not now, when we have forgotten our experience? the chiefe grounds of trusting God, are alwayes the same, whether we feele, or feel not; nay, though for the present wee feele the contrary, faith will never leave wrastling, till it hath gotten a blessing. When faith is driven to work alone, having nothing but Ged, and his bare promise !

Cap. 33. Faith alone a sufficient support.

cum omnium incertus sit eventus, ad ea accedimus de quibus bene sperandum esse credimus. Sen.

gainst all the tricks & cavils of Satan,&

our own hearts? We must labor to have

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are within the covenant. If we be never | Cap. 33. so little entred into the covenat, we are safe. And herein lies the speciall cofort of fincerity, that though our grace bee little, yet it is of the right stampe, and shews us, that we are servants, and sons, though unworthy to be so. Here a little truth will goe farre. Hence it is that the Saints in all their extremities, stil alledg fomthing, that shews that they are within the covenat, We are thy childre, thy people, or thy servats, orc. God is mindful of his covenant, but is well pleased, that we should mind him of it too; & minde it our selves to make use of it, as David doth here. Hee knew if he could bring His foul to His God, all would be quiet.

God is so ready to mercy, that he de lighteth in it, and delighteth in Christ, through whom hee may shew mercy notwith Adding his justice, as being fully satisfied in Christ. Mercy is his name that he will be known by. It is his glory which we behold in the face of Christ, who is nothing but grace and mercy it selfe. Nay, he pleads reasons for mercy, even from the sinfulnesse and misery

of

Cap. 33.

of his creature, and maintaines his owne mercy against all the wrangling cavills offlesh and blood, that would put mercy from them, and hearken more willingly to Sathans objections, then Gods arguments, till at length God subdues their spirits so farre, as they become ashamed for standing out so long a. gainst him. How ready will God be to thew mercy to us when we feeke it, that thus presseth upon us, when we seeme to refuse it? If God should take advantage of our way wardnesse, what would become of us? Sathans course is to discourage those that God would have encouraged, and to encourage those whom God never speakes peace unto, and hee thinkes to gaine both wayes. Our care therefore should be, when we resolve upon Gods wayes, to labour that no discouragement fasten upon us, feeing God and his word speake all comfort to us.

And because the best of a Christian is to come, we should raise up our spirits to waite upon God, for that mercy which is yet to come. All inferiour

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waitings for good things here, doe but Cap. 33. traine us up in the comfortable expediation of the maine.

This waiting on God, requires a great strength of grace, by reason not onely 1. of the excellency of the things waited for, (which are farre beyond any thing we can hope for in the world.) But 2. in regard of the long day which God takes before hee performerh his promise, and 3. from thence the tediousnesse of delay. 4. The many troubles of life in our way. 5. The great opposition we meet with in the world. 6. and scandalls oft times even from them that are in great esteeme for Religion. 7. together with the untowardnesse of our nature in being ready to be put off by the least discouragement. In these respects there must be more then a humane spirit to hold up the soule, and cary it along to the end of that which we wait for.

But if God be our God, that love which engaged him to binde bimselfe to us in precious promises; will furnish whikewise with grace needfull, till we

Waiting difficult.

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from its station. This hope as corke, will keep the soul (though in some heavi-	Cap. 33.
nesse) from sinking, and as an Helmet beare off the blowes that they endanger	
not our life.	
3. As God is a God of hope, so by	3.
hope of patience, which is a grace wher- by the foule refigneth up it felf to God	
in humble submission to his will, be-	
cause he is our God, as David in extremi-	
ty comforted himselfe in the Lord his God.	
Patience breeds comfort, because it	
brings experience with it of Gods owning of us to be His. The foul shod and	Ephel.6.
fenced with this, is prepared against all	
rubs and thornes in our way, so as wee	
are kept from taking offence. All trou-	
bles we suffer, doe but help patience to its perfect worke, by subduing the un-	Rom.5 3.
broken sturdinesse of our spirits, when	
wee feele by experience, wee get but	
more blowes, by standing out against	
God. 4. The Spirit of God (likewise) is a	
spirit of meeknesse, whereby though the	4.
foul be sensible of evill, yet it mode-	
rates such distempers, as would other-	
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The Soules Conflict.	541
on. For outward things God knowes how to dyet us; If our condition be not to our minde, he will bring our minde to our condition. If the spirit bee too bigge for the condition, it is never quiet, therefore God will levell both. Those wants be well supplyed that are made up with contentednesse, and with riches of a higher kinde. If the Lord be our Shepheard, we can want nothing This lifteth the weary bands and feeble	-
knees, even under chastisement, wherein though the soule mourneth in the sence of Gods displeasure, yet it rejoyceth in his Fatherly care. 6. But patience and contentment are too low a condition for the soul to rest	6.
in, therefore the spirit of God raiseth it up to a spiritual enlargement of joy. So much joy, so much light, and so much light, so much scattering of darknesse of spirit. We see in nature how a little light will prevaile over the thickest clouds	

of darknesse, a little sire wastes a great deale of drosse. The knowledge of God

to be our God, brings such a light of joy into the soul, as driveth out dark un-

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comfort-

Cap. 33.

comfortable conceits; this light makes lightsome. If the light of knowledge alone makes bold, much more the light of jey arising from our communion and interest in God. How can wee enjoy God, and not joy in him? A foule truely cheerefull rejoyceth that God whom it loveth, should think it worthy to endure any thing for him. This joy often ariseth to a spirit of glory, even in matter of outward abasement; if the trouble accompanyed with difgrace continue, the spirit of glory rests upon us, and it will rest so long, untill it make us more then Conquerours, even then when we seeme conquered: for not onely the cause, but the spirit riseth higher, the more the enemies labour to keepe it under, as we see in Stephen.

Ads 7.

With this joy goeth a spirit of courage and considence. What can daunt that soule, which in the greatest troubles hath made the great God to be its owne? Such a spirit dares bid defiance to all opposite power, setting the soule above the world, having a spirit larger and higher then the world, and seeing

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Cap. 33.

Rom.16.

all (but God) beneath it, as being in heaven already in its head. After Moles and Micab had seene God in his favour to them, how little did they regard the angry countenances of those mighty Princes that were in their times, the terrours of the world? The courage of a Christian is not onely against sensible danger, and offlesh and bloud, but against principalities, and powers of dark. nesse, against the whole kingdome of Sathan, the god of the world, whom hee knowes shortly shall be trodden under his feet. Sathan and his may for a time exercise us, but they cannot hurt us. True beleevers are so many Kings and Queens, so many Conquerours over that which others are flaves to: they can overcome themselves in revenge, they can despise those things that the world admires, and see an excellency in that which the world fets light by, they can fet upon spirituall duties, which the world cannot tell how to goe about, and endure that which others tremble to think of, and that upon wife reasons, and a sound foundation, they can put off them-Nn 3 felves.

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Cap. 33.

Tertul.in

felves, aud be content to be nothing, so their God may appeare the greater, and dare undertake and undergoe any thing for the glory of their God. This courage of Christians among the Heathers was counted obstinacy, but they knew not the power of the spirit of Christ in his, which is ever strongest, when they are weakest in themselves, they knew not the privy armour of proofe that Christians had about their hearts, and thereupon counted their courage to be obstinacy.

Some think the Martyrs were too prodigall of their bloud, and that they might have beene better advised; but such are unacquainted with the force of the love of God kindled in the heart of his childe, which makes him set such a high price upon Christ and his truth, that he counts not his life dear unto him; He knowes hee is not his owne, but hath given up himselfe to Christ, and therefore all that is his, yea if hee had more

lives to give for Christ, hee should have them. He knowes he shall be no looser by it. Hee knowes it is not a

Act.20.24.

losse of his life, but an exchange for a Cap. 33. better.

We see the creatures that are under us, will be couragious in the eye of their Masters, that are of a superiour nature above them, and shall not a Christian be couragious in the presence of his great Lord and Master, who is present with him, about him, and in him? undoubtedly hee that hath seene God once in the face of Christ, dares look the grim mest creature in the face, yea death it selfe under any shape. The feare of all things flyes before such a soule. Onely a Christian is not ashamed of his confidence. Why should not a Christian be as bold for his God, as others are for the base gods they make to themfelves ?

7. Besides a spirit of conrage (for establishing the soule) is required a spirit of constancie, whereby the soule is steeled and preserved immoveable in all conditions, whether present or to come, and is not changed in changes. And why?but because the spirit knows that God on whom it rests is unchanges

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Cap. 33.

Tertul.in

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This constancy is upheld by endea- | Cap. 33. youring to keepe a constant fight of God, for want of which it oft fares with us, like men, that having a City or Tower in their eye, passing through uneven grounds, hils and dales, sometimes get the fight thereof, sometimes lose it, and sometimes recover it againe, though the Tower be still where it was, and they neerer to then they were at first. So it is oft with our uneven spirits; when once wee have a fight of God. upon any present discouragement, wee let fall our spirits, and lose the fight of him, untill by an eye of faith we recover it againe, and see him still to be where he was at first. The cherishing of passions take away the fight of God, as clouds take away the fight of the Sun, though the Sunne be still where it was, and shineth as much as ever it did. We use to say, when the body of the Moon is betwixt the Sunne and us, that the Sunne is eclipsed, when indeed not the Sunne but the earth is darkned, the Sun loseth not one of its glorious beames. God is oft neere us, as he was unto lacob.

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 34

Pfal.73.27

neere the holy man Asaph, when hee thought him far off. I am continually with thee (saith hee) thou holdest me by my right hand. Mary in her weeping passion could not see Christ before her, hee seemed a stranger unto her. So long as we can keep our eye upon God, we are above the reach of sin or any spirituall danger.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Of confirming this trust in God. Seeke it of God himselfe. Sins hinder not: nor Satan. Conclusion and Soliloquie.

6 I.

But to returne to the drawing out of our trust by waiting. Our estate in this world is still to waite, and happy it is that we have so great things to wait for; but our comfort is, that wee have not onely a furniture of graces, one strengthening another as stones in an arch, but likewise God vouchsafeth some drops of the sweetnesse of the things

2 Pet.1.5.

things wee wayte for, both to encrease our defire of those good things, as likewife to enable us more comfortably to wayte for them. And though we should die wayting, onely cleaving to the promise with little or no taste of the good promised; yet this might comfort us, that there is a life to come, that is a life of fight and sense, and not onely of take but of fulnesse, and that for evermore. Our condition here is to live by faith and not by fight, onely to make our living by faith more lively, it pleaseth God when he sees fir, to encrease our earnest of that we looke for. Even here God waytes to be gracious to those that wayte for him. And in heaven Christ waytes for us, wee art part of his fulnesse; it is part of his joy that we shall be where he is he wil not therefore be long without us. The bleffed Angels and Saints in heaven wayte for us. Therefore let us be content as strangers, to wayte a while till we come home, and then wee shall be for ever with the Lord; there is our eternall rest, where we shall enjoy both our God and our selves in perfect

Cap. 34.

Pfal. 16.ult.

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Eph. 1.23. Joh. 17.24.

It stands us therefore upon to get this great Charter more and more confirmed to us (that God is our God) for it is of everlasting use unto us. It first begins at our entring into covenant with God, & continues not only unto death, but entreth into heaven with us. As it is our heaven upon earth to enjoy God as ours, so it is the very heaven of heaven, that there we shall for ever behold him, and have communion with him.

The degrees of manifesting this pro-

priety in God are divers, rifing one up-

on another, as the light cleares up by little

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Degrees of our propriety in God. Pro.4. 18.

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and little till it comes to a perfect day. I. As the ground of all the rest, wee appre-

hend God to be a God of some peculiar persons, as favourites above others. 2. From hence is stirred up in the soul arestlessed desire, that God would discover himselfe so to it, as he doth to those that are his, that he would visite our soules with the salvation of his chosen. 3. Hence followes a putting of the soul upon God, an adventuring it selfe on his mercy. 4. Upon this, God when he seeth sit, discovers by his spirit that he isours; 5. Whence followeth a dependance on him as ours, for all things that may cary us on in the way to heaven. 6. Courage and boldnesse in setting our selves against whatsoever may oppose us in the way, As the three young men in Daniel, our God can deliver us if he will. Our God is in heaven, &c. 7. After which springs a sweet spiritual security, whereby the soule is freed from slavish feares, and glorieth in God as ours in all conditions. And this is termed by the Apostle, not onely assurance, but the riches of assurance. Yet this is not so cleare, and full as it shall be in heaven, because some clouds may after		
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after arise out of the remainder of corruption, which may something overcast this assurance, until the light of Gods countenance in heaven for ever scatters all.

There being so great happinesse in this neerenesse betwixt God and us, no wonder if Sathan labour to hinder the same, by interposing the guilt and hainousnesse of our sinnes, which he knows of themselves will worke a separation: But these upon our first serious thought of returning, will be removed. As they could not hinder our meeting with God, so they may cause a strangenesse for a time but not a parting, a hiding of Gods countenance, but not a banishing of us from it. Peter had denied Christ, and the rest of the Apostles had lest him all alone. Yet our Saviour after his Resurrection forgets all former unkindnesses, he did not so much as object it to them, but sends Mary, who her selse had been a great sinner, as an Apo-Itle to the Apostles, and that presently

to tell them that he was rifen, his care

would have no delay. Hee knew they

Iohn 20.

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were in great heavinesse for their unkindnesse. Though he was now entred into the sirst degree of his glory, yet we see his glory made him not forget his poore Disciples. Above all he was most carefull of Peter, as deeper in sinne then the rest, and therefore deeper in sorow. Goe tell Peter, he needs most comfort. But what is the message? that I ascend not to my Father alone, but to your Father, not to my God onely, but to Your God.

And shall not wee bee bold to say so after Christ hath taught us, and put this claime into our mouthes? If once we let this hold goe, then Sathan hath us where he would, every little crosse then dejects us. Sathan may darken the joy of our falvation, but not take away the God of our falvation. David after his crying sinne of murther prayes, Restore unto me the loy of thy salvation, this hee had lost; but yet in the same Psalme hee prayes, Deliver mee from blood O God, thou God of my falvation; therefore what soever sence, reason, temptation, the law, or guilt upon conscience shall say, Nay however God himselfe, by his ftrange |

but thut our eyes to all, and look upon God All-gracious and All- sufficient, who is the Father, the begetter of comfort, the God the Creator of consolation, not

2 Cor. 1.3.

Mic.7. 18.

onely of things that may comfort, but of the comfort it self conveied through these unto us. Who is a God like unto our God, that passeth by the sinnes of the remnant of his people. This should not bee thought on without admiration, and indeed there is nothing so much deferves our wonderm nt as fuch mercy, of such a God, to such as we.

Dcu.26.18

Since God hath avouched us to be bis peculiar people, let us avouch bim; and fince he hath past his word for us, let us passe our words for him that we will be his, and stand for him, and to our power advance his cause. Thus David out of an enlarged spirit saith, Thou art my God, and I will praise thee, thou art My God, and I will exalt thee. What soever wee engage for God, wee are sure to bee gainers by. The true Chrifrian

Pf.119.28

stian is the wisest Merchant, and Cap. 34. makes the best adventure. He may stay long, but is fure of a fafe and a rich returne. A godly man is most wise for himselfe. We enter on Religion, upon these tearmes to part with our selves. and all, when God shall call for it.

6. 2.

God much rejoyceth in sinners converted, as monuments of his mercy, and because the remembrance of their former finnes, where them on to bee more earnest in his service, especially after they have felt the sence of Gods love, they even burn with a holy defire of honouring him, whom before they dishonoured, and stand not upon doing or suffering any thing for him, but cheerefully embrace all occasions of expressing obedience. God hath more worke from them then from others: why then should any be discouraged?

Neither is it somes after our converfion, that nullifie this claime of God to be ours. For this is the grand difference

Exipso dolore [uo copuncti inardescunt in amore dei. Damna precedentia lucris sequen tibus compenfant. Greg.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 34.

Heb.10.

rence betwixt the two covenants, that now God will bee merciful to our fins. if our hearts by faith be sprinkled with the blood of Christ. Though one sinne was enough to bring condemnation, yet the free gist of grace in Christ, is of many offences unto justification. And we have a fure ground for this; for the righteousnesse of Christ is Gods righteousnesse, and God will thus glorifie it, that it shall stand good to those that by faith apply it against their daily sinnes, eventill at once we cease both to live, and fin. For this very end was the Sonof God willingly made sin, that we might be freed from the same. And if all our fins laid upo Christ could not take away Gods love fro him, shal they take away Gods love from us, when by Christs blood our fouls are purged from them?

O mercy of all mercies, that when we were once his, and gave away our selves for nothing, and so became neither his, nor our owne, that then hee would vouchsafe to become ours, and make us his by such a way, as all the Angels in heaven stand wondring at,

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even his Sonnes not onely taking our nature and miserable condition, but our sin upon him, that that being done away, wee might through Christ have boldnesse with God as ours, who is now in heaven appearing there for us, untill he brings us home to himselfe, and presents us to his Father for his for ever.

Thinke not then onely that wee are Gods and he ours, but from what love and bywhat glorious meanes this was brought to passe; What can possibly disable this claime, when God for this end hath founded a covenant of peace so strongly in Christ, that sin it selfe cannot disanull it? Christ was therefore manifest, that he might destroy this greatest worke of the devill. Forgivenesse of fins now is one chiefe part of our portion in God. It is good therefore not to pore and plod so much upon sinne and vilenesse by it, as to forget that mercy that rejoyceth over judgement. If wee once be Gods, though wee drinke this deadly porson it shall not hart us. God will make a medicine, an antidote of it: and for all other evills the fruit of them is

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Mar. 16.18

by

by Gods fanctifying the same, the taking away sinne out of our natures; so that lesser evils are sent to take away the greater. If God could not overrule evils to his owne ends, hee would never suffer them.

9.3.

I have stood the longer upon this, because it is the one thing needfull, the one thing wee should defire, that this one God, in whom, and from whom is all good, should be ours. All promises of all good in the new covenant, spring first from this, that God will be ours, and we shall be his. What can we have more? and what is in the world leffe that will content us long, or stand us in any stead, especially at that time when all must be taken from us? Let us put up all our defires for all things we stand in need of, in this right wee have to God in Christ, who hath brought God and us together; hee can deny us nothing, that hath not denied us himselfe. If he be moved from hence to doe us good, that!

Ier. 32.

that wee are his, Let us be moved to Cap. 34. fetch all good from him, on the same right that he is ours.

The perswasson of this will free us from all pufillanimity, lowlinesse, and narrownesse of spirit, when wee shall think that nothing can hurt us, but it must break through God first. If God give quietnesse, who shall make trouble? If Godbe with us, who can be against us? This is that which puts comfort into all other comforts, that makethany burthen light: This is alwayes ready for all purposes: Our God is a present, and a seasonable help. All evills are at his command to be gone, and all comforts at his command to come. It is but goe comfort, goe peace to such a mans heart, cheere him, raise him; Go Salvation, rescue such and such a soul in distresse. So said and so done presently. Nay, with reverence be it spoken, so farre doth God passe over himselfe untous, that he is content himselfe to be commanded by us. Concerning the worke of my hands command you me : lay the care and charge of that upon mee.

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Tob 34.39

Ifay 45.11

He

Car. 34.

He is content to be out-wrastled, and over-powred by a spirit of faith, as in lacob, and the woman of Canaan, to be as it were at our fervice. Hee would not have us want any thing wherein hee is able to help us. And what is there wherein God carnot help us? If Christians knew the power they have in heaven and earth, what were able to standagainst them? What wonder is it if fauth overcome the world, if it o vercomes him that made the world? that faith should bee Almighty, that hath the Almighry himselfe, ready to use all his power for the good of them to whom he hath given the power of himselfe unto? Having therefore such a living fountaine to draw from, such a center wrest in, having all in one, and that one ours; why should we knocke at any other doore? we may goe boldly to God now, as made ours, being bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Wee may goe more comfortably to God, then to any Angellor Saint. God in the second person hath vouchsafed to take our nature upon him, but not that of Angells. Our

Tutius & jucundius loquor ad meun Jelum quam ad alequem fanctorum dei & c. Quod ego fum fiers dignatus est Deus, non

Our God, and our Man, our God-Man is ascended into the high Court of heaven to his and our God, cloathed with our nature. Is there any more able and willing to plead our cause, or to whom wee may trust businesses with then he, who is in heaven for all things

for us, appertaining to God.

. It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian, upon knowledge of what he stands in need of, to know where to supply all. It should raise up a holy shame and indignation in us, that there should be so much in God, who is so neere unto us in Christ, and wee make so little use of him. What good can a ny thing doe us if we use it not? God. is ours to use, and yet men will rather use shifts and unhallowed pollicies, then be beholding to God, who thinkes himselfe never more honoured by us, then when we make use of him. If we beleeve any thing will doe us good, we naturally make out for the obtaining of it, If we beleeve any thing will hurt us, we study to decline it. And certaine it is if wee beleeved that so much good 004 were

Cap. 34. factus eft quod angeli. Adcuriam Dei sui Dei tui, præceffit Deus tuus homotu us, tunica tua indutus illie affidue pro nobis interpellat. Aug. Heb.5.1.

were in God, we would then apply our selves to him, and him to our selves; whatfoever vertue is in any thing, it is conveyed by application and touching of it; that whereby we touch God, is our faith, which never toucheth him, but it drawes vertue from him; upon the first touch of faith, spirituall life is begun. Its a bastard in nature, to beleeve any thing can worke upon another without spirituall or bodily touch. And it is a Monster in Religion, to beleeve that any faving good will iffue from God, if we turne from him, and shut him out, and our hearts be unwilling. Where unbeleefe is, it bindes up his power. Where faith is, there it is between the foule and God, (as betwixt the iron and the Loadstone) a present closing and drawing of one to the other. This is the beginning of eternall life, so to know God the Father, and his Sonne Christ, as thereby to embrace him with the armes of fatth and love, as ours, by the best title he can make us, who is truth it selfe.

Iohn 17.4.

Since then our happinesse lies (out of

of our (elves) in God, we should goe out Cap. 34. of our selves for it, and first get into Christ, and so unto God in him; and then labour by the spirit of the Father and the Sonne, to maintaine acquainrance with both, that so God may be Ours, not onely in covenant, but in Communion, hearkning what he will say to us, and opening our spirits, disclosing our wants, consulting and advising in all our distresses with him. By keeping this acquaintance with God, peace, and Iob 22.21 all good is conveyed to us.

Thereafter as we maintain this communion further with him, wee out of love study to please him, by exact walking according to his commands; then we shall feele encrease of peace as our care encreaseth, then he will come, and Sup with us, and be free in his refreshing of us. Then he will shew himselfe more and more to us, and manifest still a further degree of presence in joy and strength, untill communion in grace, ends in communion in glory.

But wee must remember (as David doth here) to defire and delight in God bimselfe,

himselfe, more then in any thing that is Gods: It was a signe of S Pauls pure love to the Corinthians, when he said, I seeke not yours, but you. We should seeke for no blessing of God so much as for himselfe.

What is there in the world of equall goodnes to draw us away fro our God? If to preserve the dearest thingwe have in the world, we breake with God, God will take away the comfort we look to have by it, and it will prove but a dead contentment, if not a torment to us. Whereas if we care to preserve communion with God, we shall bee sure to finde in him whatsoever we deny for him, honor, riches pleasures, friends, all; fo much the sweeter, by how much wee have them more immediately from the foring head. We shall never finde God to be our God more, then when for making of him to be so, we suffer any thing for his sake. Wee enjoy never more of him then then.

At the first we may seeke to him, as rich to supply our wants, as a Physician to cure our soules and bodies, but here

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wee must not rest till wee come to rejoyce in him as our friend, and from thence rise to an admiration of him for his owne excellencies, that being so high in himselse, out of his goodnesse would stoop low to us. And we should delight in the meditation of him, not onely as good to us, but as good in himselse; because goodnesse of bounty springs from goodnesse of disposition, be doth good because he is good.

A naturall man delights more in Gods gifts, then in his grace. If he defires grace, it is to grace himselfe, not as grace, making him like unto God, and issuing from the first grace the free favour of God; by which meanes men come to have the gifts of God without God himselfe. But alas, what are all other goods without the chiefe good? they are but as flowers, which are long in planting, in cherishing and growing, but short in enjoying the sweetnesse of them. David here joyes in God himselfe, he cares for nothing in the world, but what he may have with his favour, and what ever else he desires, hee deCap. 34.

Dona Dei sine Deo.

fires

fires onely that he may have the better ground from thence to praise his God.

6.4.

The summe of all is this, The state of Gods deare children in this world, is to bee cast into wariety of conditions, wherein they consisting of nature, slesh, and spirit, every principle hath its owne and proper working. They are sensible as slesh and blood, they are sensible to discouragement as sinful slesh and blood; but they recover themselves as having a higher principle (Gods spirit) above slesh and blood in them.

In this conflicting state, every principle labouring to maintaine it selfe, at length by helpe of the spirit, backing and strengthening his owne worke, grace gets the better, keeping nature within bounds, and suppressing corruption. And this the soule (so farre as it is spirituall) doth by gathering it selfe to it selfe, and by reasoning the case so farre, till it concludes, and joynes upon this issue, that the onely way to attaine

taine found peace, is (when all other meanes faile) to trust in God. And thereupon he layes a charge upon his soule so to doe, is being a course grounded upon the highest reason, even the unchangeable goodnesse of God, who out of the riches of his mercy, having chosen a people in this world, which should be to the glory of his mercy, will give them matter of fetting forth his praise, in shewing some token of good upon them, as being those on whom he hath fixed his love, and to whom hee will appeare not onely a Saviour, but salvation it selfe. Nothing but salvation; as the Sunne is nothing but light, so whatsoever proceeds from him to them, tends to further falvation. All his wayes towards them leade to that; which wayes of his, though for a time they are secret, and not easily found out, yet at length God will be wonderfull in them to the admiration of his enemies themselves, who shall be forced to say, God hath done great things for them; and all from this ground, that God is our God in

in covenant. Which words are a stearne that rule and guide the whole text.

For why should we not be disquieted when we are disquieted? Why should we not be cast downe when we are cast downe? Why should we trust in God as a Savious? but that he is [our God,] making himselfe so to us in his choisest favours: doing that for us, which none else can doe, and which he doth to none else that are not his in a gracious maner. This blessed interest and intercourse betwixt Gods spirit and our spirits, is the hindge upon which all turns: without this, no comfort is comfortable; with this, no trouble can be very troublesome.

Without this affurance there is little comfort in Soliloquies; unlesse, when we speake to our selves, wee can speake to God as ours. For in desperate cases, our soule can say nothing to it selfe, to still it selfe, unlesse it be suggested by God; Discouragements will appeare greater to the soule then any comfort, unlesse God comes in as ours.

See therefore Davids art, hee de-

mands of himselfe why hee was so cast Cap. 34. downe? The cause was apparant, because there was troubles without, and terrours within, and none to comfort, Well, grant this saith the spirit of God Soliloquie. in him (as the worst must be granted) yet faith the Spirit, Trust in God.

So I have.

Why then, waite in trusting? Light is sowen for the righteous, it comes not up on the suddaine, we must not think to sowe and reape both at once. If trouble be lengthened, lengthen thy patience.

What good will come of this?

God will waite to doe thee that good, for which thou shalt praise him; he will deale so graciously with thee, as he will deserve thy praise, he will shew thee his Salvation. And new favours will stirre thee np to fing new fongs: every new recovery of our felves or friends, is as it were a new life, and ministers new matter of praise. And upon offering this facrifice of praise, the heart is further enlarged to pray for fresh blessings. Wee are never fitter to pray, then after praise.

Cap. 34.

But in the meane time I hang down my head, whilest mine enemies cariethemselves bighly, and my friends stand aloofe.

God in his owne time (which is best for thee) will be the falvation of thy countenance, he will compasse thee about with songs of deliverance, and make it appeare at last, that he hath care of thee.

But why then doth God appeare as a

stranger to me?

That thou shou'dst follow after him with the stronger faith and prayer, hee withdrawes himself, that thou shouldst bee the more earnest in seeking after him. God speakes the sweetest comfort to the heart in the wildernesse. Happily thou art not yet low enough, nor purged enough. Thy affections are not throughly crucified to the world, and therefore it will not yet appeare that it is Gods good will to deliver thee. Wert thou a fit subject of mercy, God would bestow it on thee.

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But what ground hast thou to build thy selfe so strongly upon God?

He hath offered, and made himselfe

to be [My God,] and so hath shewed himselse in former times; And I have made him My God, by yeelding him his Soveraignty in my heart. Besides the present evidence of his blessed spi. rit, clearing the same, and many peculiar tokens of his love, which I daily doe enjoy; though sometimes the beams of his favour are eclipsed. Those that are Gods, besides their interest and right in him, have oft a sense of the same even in this life, as a fore-taste of that which is to come. To the feale of grace stamped upon their hearts, God super-adds a fresh seale of joy and comfore, by the presence and witnesse of his Spirit. And shewes likewise some outward token for good upon them, whereby he makes it appeare, that bee hath fet a part him that is godly for himselfe, as his owne.

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Thus we see that discussing of objections in the consistory of the soule, settles the soule at last. Faith at length silencing all risings to the contrary. All motion tends to rest, and ends in it;

God is the center and resting place of

Pfal.4.3.

the soule, and here David takes up his rest, and so let us. Then whatsoever times come, wee are sure of a hiding place and Sanctuary.

FINIS.

HAB. 3. 17.

Although the figge tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall faile, and the fields shall yeeld no meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation,

PSAL.91. 1. 2.

Hee that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high, shall lodge under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortresse; My God in him will I trust.

PSAL. 73. 26.

My strength and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

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7.

Yet not in hell, nor at worst, a mercie, and un-

Yet not in hell, nor at worst, a mercie, and undeserved.

Youth to be curbed quickly.

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FINIS.

